VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

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(VOICE OF ENLIGHTENED AND ASSERTIVE NATIONALISM)

Congress Speaks 1915—1922

VOLUME VIII

(Book 1)

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PREFACE

The story of Indian freedom movement is a splendid record of ceaseless growth and development of national consciousness from one stage to another, each successive stage having its own distinctive features. It illustrates the fact of different trends prevailing at different times but all having a sort of fundamental unity at the base. The 'moderates' of the early phase of the twentieth century adopted a line different from that of the 'trend-setters' of the later part of the nineteenth century. The 'extremists' then chalked out a different course that looked like a clear departure from the line set by the founding fathers of the freedom struggle and, for this reason, their utterances and actions were looked at with ample apprehension not only by the British rulers but also by the leading lights of the 'moderate school'. However, a deeper study of the role of the 'moderate' and the 'extremist' leaders reveals the fact that the differences between the two were more of a degree than that of a kind.

A proper study of India's freedom movement covers all what prominent Indian figures thought and did for the great cause; it also covers important reactions, interpretations and pronouncements of the British leaders and observers. That is, India's freedom movement is inextricably related to her constitutional development. The British rulers sought to make laws, one after another, so as to change their system of administration with the growth of Indian nationalist movement. In other words, they sought to adjust their colonial system with the growing demands of Indian nationalism as far possible. While the Government of India Act of 1858 replaced the rule of the Company by the rule of the Crown, the Indian Councils Act of 1861 inaugurated the 'policy of association'. The Indian Councils Act of 1892 came as an improvement upon the Act of 1861. Then, the Indian Councils Act of 1909 (Morley-Minto Reforms) came as an improvement upon the

previous Act. It also came as a gift of the policy of conciliation and counterpoise of the natives against the natives. And then came the Government of India Act of 1919 to reward the Indians diplomatically for their services rendered during the first World War. It was another constitutional device to cheat the Indian people in the name of giving them responsible government in doses. As such, it failed to placate the Indian political opinion. With the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi on the scene, a fundamental change in the course of our freedom struggle occurred and his call for 'non-cooperation' paved the way for India's demand for complete independence.

As such, I have put the matter in two parts. While Part I contains addresses delivered by the Presidents on the occasion of the annual meets of the Indian National Congress, Part II has important readings related to India's constitutional development. The noteworthy point is that our national leaders spoke in different 'voices' and so I have sought to include their views in different volumes with a view to maintain, as far as possible, the unity of a particular trend. In this volume I have included Presidential addresses of the period of the first World War and immediately thereafter marked by astonishing progress in the sphere of Congress-League rapprochement signifying Hindu-Muslim unity and the emergence of Gandhian leadership that marked a unique blending of the trends of moderatism and extremism. I hope that my scheme would receive the appreciation of readers who would find here much for the purpose of their advanced study or research in this important field of modern Indian history and politics.

I have drawn material from numerous published sources, Indian and foreign, according to my own scheme and I offer my sincere gratitude to all of them. I am thankful to a large number of my friends for the help they extended to me for the completion of this project. I am thankful to Seema Saxena and Seema Johari who helped me in the collection and arrangement of the matter and checking of proofs. In particular, I am grateful to my Publishers who appreciated this project and took pains to bring out this volume in a record time.

—**J.C. Johari**

INTRODUCTION

A study of the addresses delivered by the Presidents of the Indian National Congress on the occasion of the annual meets during the period of first World War and immediately thereafter shows a continuity with as well as a break from the past. The trend of admiring the British rule alongwith frank affirmation of unswerving loyalty to the British Crown continued, though its force became increasingly weak. The goal of achieving swaraj within the Empire in the form of Dominion Status for India also continued, but with a question mark. In fact, the trend of attacks on bureaucratic wrongs became more sharp after the promulgation of the Rowlatt Act and the occurrence of Jallianwala Bagh tragedy in 1919. However, the adoption of Gandhiji's thesis of 'non-cooperation' marked clear departure from the past and so some eminent leaders like Mrs. Annie Besant, Surendranath Banerjea and M.A. Jinnah left the Congress in protest and resentment. Obviously, the Congress Presidential addresses relating to this period touch the two extremes of pre- and post-World War I phases; while the former is known for being quite dull and passive,[1] the latter, in the words of Nehru, is known for being active on account of keeping people "in a state of suppressed excitement."[2]

The first World War broke out in 1914 and the Congress liberals offered full copperation to the Raj with the hope that

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1. As Jawaharlal Nehru observes: "Towards the end of 1912 India was politically very dull. Tilak was in gaol, the Extremists had been sat upon and were lying low without any effective leadership. Bengal was quiet after the unsettling of the partition of the province and the Moderates had been effectively 'rallied' to the Minto-Morley scheme of the councils. The Congress was a moderate group, meeting annually, passing some feeble resolutions, and attracting little attention." *An Autobiography*, p. 27.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

after its termination India would be granted self-rule that would make her an integral part of the British Empire. So S.P. Sinha in his address at the Bombay Congress (1915) hopefully visualised: "The question which, above all others, is engrossing our mind at the present moment is the war, and the supreme feeling which arises in our minds is one of deep admiration for the self-imposed burden which England is bearing in the struggle for liberty and freedom, and a feeling of profound pride that India has not fallen behind other portions of the British Empire, but has stood shoulder to shoulder with them by the side of the Imperial Mother in the hour of her sorest trial." However, he did not speak like a blind admirer of the Raj like his predeccessors belonging to the 'moderate school', nor did he show his pessimism about the eventual advent of self-rule in the country He counselled cool and patient approach for the sake of winning self-rule and hoped that it would be a definite result of the better minds both of England and India. As he stressed on the same occasion: "The regeneration and reconstruction of India can take place only under the guidance and control of England and while we admit that the goal is not yet, we refuse to believe that it is so distant as to render it a mere vision of the imagination."

In 1915 the Indian National Congress, in a sense, witnessed its rebirth. What unfortunately happened at Surat in 1907 in the form of exit of the 'extremists' saw its fortunate mutilation in the form of their re-entry into the organisation as a result of the concerted efforts of Mrs. Annie Besant, in particular. By all means, it was like home-coming of the leaders who had taken to a different course in a fit of fiery patriotism. In his address at the Lucknow Congress (1916), A.C. Mazumdar gave vent to his jubilant feelings when he said that "even the darkest cloud is said to have its silver lining and, in this vale of sorrow, there is hardly any misfortune which has not both a positive and a negative side. If the united Congress was buried in the debris of the old French Garden at Surat, it is reborn today in the Kaiserbagh of Lucknow, the garden of the generous king Wajid Ali Shah. After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the wilderness of misunderstandings and the mazes of unpleasant controversies,

each widening the breach and lengthening the chain of separation, both the wings of the Indian Nationalist Party have come to realise that united they stand, but divided they fall, and brothers have at last met brothers and embraced each other with the gush and ardour, peculiar to a reconciliation after a long separation."

It prepared the ground for Home Rule Movement in which Tilak and Jinnah took a prominent part. It signified that India desired complete self-rule as an integral part and an equal partner of the British Empire. It had its clear expression in the address of A.C. Mazumdar who frankly observed: "Our first demand is that India must cease to be a dependency and be raised to the state of a self-governing state as an equal partner with equal rights and responsibilities as an independent unit of the Empire." More forceful was the tone of Mrs. Annie Besant who in her address at the Calcutta Congress (1917) said that once the condition of India's loyalty was India's freedom, but now the condition of India's usefulness to the Empire was India's freedom. As she said: "Great Britain needs India as much as India needs England, for prosperity in peace as well as for safety in war. Therefore, I say that for both countries alike, the lesson of the war is Home Rule for India."

That India could have her all-round development under the British rule eventually leading to her emergence as a free nation and as an important partner of the Empire saw its forceful expression in these addresses. S. P. Sinha in his address at the Bombay Congress (1915) said : "We have only to look round to see the manifold blessings which have been brought to this country by that Government." Following into the footsteps of his predecessors, he went on to counsel that the best way to achieve self-rule "is by means of such progressive improvement in our mental, moral and material conditions as will, on the one hand, render us worthy of it and, on the other, impossible for our rulers to withhold it." So Madan Mohan Malaviya in his address at the Delhi Congress (1918) reiterated : "Since India passed directly under the British Crown, we have owed allegiance to the Sovereign of England. We stand unshaken in that allegiance. . . . We still

desire to remain subjects of the British Crown. There is, however, the second and no less important aspect of self-determination, namely, that being under the British Crown, we should be allowed complete responsible government on the lines of the Dominions, in the administration of all our domestic affairs."

It follows that stress on the sanctity of means continued to inform the heads of the Indian National Congress in as much as it alone would definitely lead to the advent of swaraj. We may, however, endorse that the tone of the leaders became more sharp after the advent of Gandhiji on the scene. It may be noted in the address of Vijayraghavachariar who at the Nagpur Congress (1920) said : "If we then ordain the new nation of India without feelings of hatred and without feelings of venedetta, externally and with fraternity and love internally, I believe we can compel the Coalition Government and the one-tenth people of England at once to confess their sins to admit the imperious justice of our claim for immediate responsible Government."

The August (1917) Declaration of the Secretary of State (Montagu) assuring the Indian people of gradual realisation of self-governing institutions in the country was widely hailed. But later events shattered the hopes of the Indian people. The Montford Report of 1918 had a mixed reception. The conscientious leaders of the Congress put their fingers at its pitfalls. So in his address at the Special Session held at Bombay (1918), Hasan Imam painfully observed that the proposals "have placed us under a great disappointment for though the essentials of our demand are acknowledged in theory, they have not been conceded in substance." And yet while adhering to the course of a constitutional struggle, he suggested : "Under disappointment our mind would naturally be prone to be occupied with the evil that disquiets it, but true wisdom lies in calmly finding out the means to remove the evil. The history of our Congress is the history of patient constitutional struggle."

We have already taken note of the fact that while the liberal leaders of the Congress admired British rule as a 'divine dispensation', they never desisted in riticising the

bureaucratic administration for its acts of commission and omission. This trend became more manifest after the partition of Bengal in 1905, and it continued with greater vigour inspite of the annulment of the partition in 1911. In his address at the Lucknow Congress (1916), A. C. Mazumdar in quite unequivocal terms said : "The present form of government, whatever its claims for the maintenance of an orderly administration may be, is more or less an anachronism." Likewise, in his address at the Amritsar Congress (1919), Motilal Nehru hit at the staggering provisions of the Rowlatt Act. He said that this law crushed liberties of the people to the extent that there was no room left for *dalil* (argument), *vakil* (lawyer) and *appeal* (reconsideration). But most scathing was his attack on the role of bureaucracy in the great tragedy of Amritsar that occurred on the Baisakhi Day (13 April) in 1919. He contended that the imposition of Martial Law in the Punjab by the Governor (Michael O'Dwyer) was entirely uncalled for and the indiscriminate firing on the innocent people under orders from Gen. Dyer caused this 'saddest and most revealing of all tragedies'. He did not spare the Hunter Committee that gave its findings in favour of the cruel and inhuman bureaucratic administration.[3]

Though not in agreement with Gandhi's programme of 'non-cooperation', C.R. Das became a changed man after it was endorsed at the Nagpur Congress. In his address written for the Ahmedabad Congress (1921), he exposed the Act of 1919 in the name of sheer despotic rule of the British Government at the Centre and a hoax of 'dyarchical' system in the provinces. With a view to break the citadel of bureaucratic power, he devised the strategy of 'smashing reforms from within.' That is, the elected leaders of the people should take their seats in the legislative chambers and then criticise the bureaucratic administration and defeat all government bills, budgets

3. Motilal Nehru quoted these poignant words of C. F. Andrews as a mark of the verdict of a well-intentioned Englishman: "I have gone into every single detail with all the care and thoroughness that a personal investigation could command and it remains to me an unspeakable disgrace indefensible, unpardonable, inexcusable."

and proposals. As a skilful lawyer he could define this line of action as throughly consistent with Gandiji's programme of non-cooperation. He stressed the point that only after destroying bureaucracy, the reconstruction of the country could take place. In his address at the Gaya Congress (1922) he said : "As a matter of fact, circumstanced as we are, with the Bureauracy to the right, and Bureaucracy to the Left, Bureaucracy all round us, it is impossible to create without destroying; nor must it be forgotten that if we break, it is only that we may build."[4]

The British colonial system was based on the maxim of divide and rule. The British rulers very cautiously and assiduously played off the Hindus and the Muslims against each other. The partition of Bengal was effected in 1905 with such a consideration. The creation of the Muslim League in 1906 and the granting of separate electorate system for the Muslims under the Act of 1909 were also informed by similar consideration. The Congress always stood for Hindu-Muslim unity, The conditions of the first World War forced the leaders of the Muslim League to change their line of thought and action. The fears of injustice to Turkey (as she was fighting against the Allies) compelled the Muslims to have friendship with the Congress.[5] The Congress heartily reciprocated the move as a result of which the Lucknow Pact (1916) came into being. Thus, in his address at the Lucknow Congress (1916) : A. C. Mazumdar expressed happiness at the fact : "Another difficulty put forward is the eternal question of the difference between the Hindus and the Mohammedans of India. But the game has been nearly played out and the Hindus and the Mohammedans have practically solved the question." The Khilafat issue was related to the Muslims only

4 Dr. P. C. Ray comments that C. R. Das "became an awful portent of danger and a lion in the path of the Indian bureaucracy." *The Life and Times of C. R. Das*, p. 202.

5. See Lal Bahadur : *Struggle for Pakistan*, Chapter 5. It was officially acknowledged that the joint Congress League session inB ombay (1915) witnessed "the high water-mark of Indian nationalism. The old game of playing the Musalmans against the Hindus has been played out." ***Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms***, Para 21, p. 11.

and yet the Hindu leaders of the Congress gave their support to the Muslims as it was a problem of their brethren, their neighbours, who were in distress owing to the imperialistic moves of the Allied powers to take away all Turkish possessions of West Asia and to destroy the authority of the Sultan of Turkey as the Pope (Khalifa) of the Muslim world. Mahatma Gandhi rendered full support to the cause of the Khilafat. In his address at the Amritsar Congress (1919), Motilal Nehru made the position of the Congress very clear when he said : "I now turn to a question of supreme importance to our Mohammedan brothers and for that reason of equal importance to all Indians. I mean the Khilafat question. It is impossible for one part of the nation to stand aloof while the other part is suffering from a serious grievance." In his address at the Special Calcutta Congress (1920), Lala Lajpat Rai advised the Congressmen to support the Khilafat Movement keeping in view its political, not religious, aspect.

The last naticeable point is that after the first World War a new consciousness developed that signified loss of faith in the superiority of the white races of Europe. It thus invigorated the pace of freedom struggle. The case for self-rule within the Empire started growing weak and so the Indian National Congress appreciated change in its constitution made by Gandhiji that India desired 'swaraj within the Empire if possible, without it if necessary'. This change had its brilliant manifestation in the emergence of Congress as an organisation of the masses under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. By all means it was a change of a fundamental nature. Lala Lajpat Rai took note of this fact and in his address at the Special Calcutta Congress (1920) said : "During the last six months since I landed on the 20th February last, I have been in close touch with the masses of my countrymen. I have seen them in their thousands, in processions, at meetings, and have met their representatives in private. I have seen their political awakening. It has exceeded my wildest expectations. Under the circumstances we have to remember that in any programme we make, we must carry the masses along with us."

—J.C. Johari

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PART I

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES (1915-1922)

Swim Across This Ocean of Misery

How long will it take, thee, O Bharata,
To swim across this ocean of misery ?

Or, sinking and sinking in depression,
Wilt thou enter the nether regions for ever ?

Having gladly offered thy jewels to the stranger,
Thou carriest now only an iron chain on thy breast.

There are no rows of light in thy cities

(owned by the stranger)

But thou art in darkness all the same.

(A Bengali song written by Babu Govinda Chandra Roy translated into English by B.C. Pal)

1

UNSWERVING LOYALTY TO THE SOVEREIGN

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I return you my profoundest acknowledgement of gratitude for the high and honourable position to which you have called me. It is a peculiarly responsible position, for this year the task of delivering the annual message of the Indian National Congress is beset with special difficulties. The atmosphere created by the titanic struggle overshadowing the entire civilised world is not helpful to the calm and dispassionate consideration of our many complex and delicate national problems. And my task is made all the more difficult as the cruel hand of death has removed from our midst, within a few months of each other, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta and Henry Cotton—three of our most beloved and sagacious leaders whose counsels would have been of incalculable value to us today and whose loss we all so deeply mourn.

Would that this task had been committed to some one more competent than myself. Willingly would I have avoided it, gladly would I have remained for the rest of my life, as I have been in the past, a humble camp-follower of the Congress.

You know that I did not seek this position any more than I had sought that other exalted position which it fell to my lot to occupy a few years ago as the first Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. I pray I may not be misunderstood, for I say this in no boastful spirit but in all humility. For no one is more conscious than myself that that honour was conferred not so much on me personally as on the Indian

*Presidential address delivered by Sir S. P. Sinha at the Bombay Congress held on 27-29 December, 1915.

National Congress, in recognition of the justice and moderation of the claims it had persistently put forward for over a quarter of a century on behalf of the people of India.

For myself, I had never dared to aspire to 'he chair of Macaulay and Maine any more than I ever dreamt of occupying this chair hallowed by its association with some of the most devoted workers in the cause of our Motherland. In both cases, I yielded to a sense of supreme duty. And on this occasion, I cannot do better than what I did do nothing and say nothing which will compromise the rights and best interests, the honour and the dignity, of any country.

The King-Emperor

My first duty today is again to lay at the feet of our august and beloved Sovereign our unswerving fealty, our unshaken allegiance, and our enthusiastic homage. His Majesty has been with our soldiers on the battle-field. His son shares with them all the hardships of war. And we desire to express our gratitude to Almighty God for shielding our beloved Emperor and enabling him to endure with fortitude the physical suffering inseparable from his recent accident and restoring him to devoted people in renewed health and strength. Long may he live to lead his people and promote their happiness and prosperity.

The War

The question which, above all others, is engrossing our minds at the present moment is the war, and the supreme feeling which arises in our minds is one of deep admiration for the self-imposed burden which England is bearing in the struggle for liberty and freedom, and a feeling of profound pride that India had not fallen behind other portions of the British Empire, but has stood shoulder to shoulder with them by the side of the Imperial Mother in the hour of her sorest trial. In the great galaxy of heroes, in the imperishable Roll of Honour, there are now, and there will never cease to be, beloved Indian names testifying to the fact that our people would rather die unsullied than outlive the disgrace of surrender to a bastard civilisation.

Our conviction is firm that, by the guidance of that divine spirit which shapes the destiny of nations, the cause of right will ultimately prevail and the close of the struggle will usher in a new era in the history of the human race.

Brother-delegates,—my next duty is to convey our unstinted admiration and our heart-felt gratitude to those of our brethern who have been shedding their blood in the battle-fields of Europe, Asia and Africa, in defence of Empire. The war has given India an opportunity, as nothing else could have done, of demonstrating the courage, bravery and tenacity of her troops, even when pitted against the best organised armies of the world, and also the capacity of her sons of all classes, creeds and nationalities to rise as one people under the stimulus of an over powering emotion. That the wave of loyalty which has swept over India has touched the hearts of all classes had been ungrudingly admitted even by unfriendly critics. The Bengalee is just as anxious to fight under the banner of His Majesty the King-Emperor as the Sikh and the Pathan and those of them to whom an opportunity has been given to serve either in ambulance, postal or despatch work, have shown as great a disregard of danger and devotion to duty as others employed in the more arduous work of fighting. India has risen to the occasion, and her princes and peoples have vied with each other in rallying round the imperial standard at a time when the enemies of the Empire counted on disaffection and internal troubles. The spectacle affords a striking proof as much of the wisdom of those statesmen who have in recent years guided the destiny of the British Empire in India as of the fitness of the Indian people to grasp the dignity and the responsibilities of citizenship of a world-wide empire. Nor must we forget to tender to the families of those who have laid down their lives in the glorious cause our sincere and respectful sympathy.

Brother delegates, doubts have been expressed in some quarters as to the wisdom of the Congress assemblies while the war is still going on. It has been suggested that discussion of political problems might be misconstrued as an attempt to advance individual national interests at a time of imperial stress.

I do not think that such apprehensions are well-founded. If we had any doubt as to the ultimate success of England, we might well hesitate to discuss questions which can only arise after the war is over and peace is concluded. We want to make it perfectly clear, if we have not done so already, that there is no one among us willing to cause the slightest embarrassment to the Government. We seek to make to capital out of the service so ungrudgingly rendered by our countrymen to the Empire. There is not, I trust, a single person in our camp who expects reforms as the price or the reward of our loyalty. That loyalty would indeed be a poor thing if it proceeded from a lively sense of favours to come. Nor could any serious and responsible Indian publicist advocate that, as the result of the war, there should be a sudden and violent breakage in the evolution of political institutions in India. The problem before us is how, without asking for any violent departure from the line of constitutional development which farsighted statesmen. English and Indian, desire for Indian, we can still press for a substantial advance towards the development of free institutions in this country. It is our earnest hope that the spontaneous outburst of loyalty throughout the country has dispelled for ever all sense of distrust and suspicion between ourselves and our rulers, and that, after the war is over, British officials will consider it their duty not so much to administer our affairs efficiently as to train the people themselves to administer them, and that, with this change of spirit, the people also will begin to look upon these officials as zealous co-adjutors in the task of their political self-development.

Brother delegates, this brings me naturally to what has been a burning topic in the Congress for many years, which has led to bitter differences and fierce dissensions and with regard to which you are entitled to ask my views our political ideal, our duties in the present, and our prospects in the future.

Our Ideal—Self-Government

What, to begin with, should be the political ideal of India ? To some, the raising of this question may seem to be unnecessary

and at best academic and, to others, positively mischievous. To me, however, it seems that the greatest, danger in the path of the future well-being of the country is the want of a reasoned ideal of our future such as would satisfy the aspirations and ambitions of the rising generations of India and at the same time meet with the approval of those to whose hands our distinies are committed. It is my belief that a rational and inspiring ideal will arrest the insidious and corrupting influence of the real enemies of our Motherland, even if it is not able to root out from the land that malignant mental disease which has been called anarchism and whose psychology it is so difficult to analyse. It must be obvious to all sincere and impartial judges that no mandate whether of the Government or of the Congress will be able to still the throbbing pain in the soul of awakening India, unless the ideal which is held up by the Congress and accepted by the Government commends itself first to the heart and then to the head. It seems to me, brother delegates, that the only satisfactory form of self-government to which India aspires cannot be anything short of what President Lincoln so pithily described as "government of the people, for the people, and by the people."

When I say this, I do not for one moment imply that the British Government is not the best Government we have had for ages. We have only to look round to see the manifold blessing which have been brought to this country by that Government. But as a British Premier early in this century very truly observed, "good government cannot be a substitute for self-government." Says a recent writer in a well-known British periodical : "Every Englishman is aware that on no account, not if he were to be governed by an angel from heaven, would he surrender that most sacred of all his rights, the right of making his own laws... He would not be an Englishman, they would not be able to look English fields and trees in the face, if he had parted with that right. Laws in themselves have never counted for much. There have been beneficient despots and wise laws-givers in all ages who have increased the prosperity and probably the contentment and happiness of their subjects, but yet their government has not stimulated the moral and intellectual capacity latent

in citizenship or fortified its character or enlarged its understanding. There is more hope for the future of mankind in the least and faintest impulse towards self-help, self-realisation, self-redemption than in any of the laws that Aristotle ever dreamt of." The ideal, therefore, of self-government is one that is not based merely on emotion and sentiment, but on all the lessons of history.

I believe in all sincerity that such has been the ideal which the British Government itself has entertained and cherished almost from the commencement of British rule in India. Generations of statesmen have repeatedly laid down that policy, solemn declarations of successive sovereigns have graciously endorsed it, and Acts of Parliament have given it legislative sanction. I will not burden my speech with quotations from these; they will all be found in previous Presidential addresses. But, with your, leave, I will quote only one passage from a speech of John Bright delivered at Manchester on the 11th of December, 1877 : "I believe it," said John Bright, "that it is our duty not only to govern India well now for our sakes and to satisfy our own conscience, but so to arrange its government and so to administer it that we should look forward to the time when India will have to take up her own government and administer it in her own fashion I say he is no statesman—he is no man actuated with a high moral sense with regard to our great and terrible moral responsibility—who is not willing thus to look ahead and thus to prepare for circumstances which may come sooner than we think and sooner than any of us hope for, but which must come at some not very distant date."

It is, however, unfortunately the fact that a few years ago unhappy statements and even actions of responsible statesmen gave rise to a widespread suspicion among large classes of people in all parts of India that there was a change of policy—a deliberate intention to retrace the steps. That this suspicion is not wholly without foundation will appear from the estimate of an eminent French publicist who cannot be charged with either lack of admiration for the British administration of India or an excess of sympathy for the Indian reform party. This is what

Mr. M. Chailley says (I am reading from page 188 of the translation by the present Finance Member, Sir William Meyer) :

"Had England taken as her motto 'India for the Indians', had she continued following the ideas of Elphinstone and Malcolm to consider her rule as temporary, she might without inconsistency grant to the national party gradual and increasing concessions which in time would give entire autonomy to the Indians. Does any resonable man imagine that it is possible to satisfy the palpitating hearts of the thousands of young men who, to use the classic words of Lord Morley, "leave our universities intoxicated with the ideas of freedom, nationality and self-government," with the comfortless assurance that free institutions are the special privilege of the West ? Can any one wonder that many of these young men, who have not the same robust faith in the integrity and benevolence of England as the members of this Congress, should lose heart at the mere suspicion of such a policy, and, driven to despair, conclude that "the roar and scream of confusion carnage" is better than peace and order without even the distant prospect of freedom ? Fifteen years ago, Lord Morley said : "the sacred word 'free' represents, as Englishmen have thought until today the noblest aspiration that can animate the breast of man." And today millions of Englishmen are freely sacrificing their lives in order that others may be free : therefore, an Englishman will be the first person to realise and appreciate the great insistent desire in the heart of India, and I for myself say with all the emphasis and earnestness that I can command that if the noble policy of Malcolm and Elphinstone, Canning and Ripon, Bright and Morley, is not steadily, consistently and unflinchingly adhered to, the moderate party amongst us will soon be depleted of all that is fine and noble in human character. For my part, I believe with the fervour of religious conviction that that wise and righteous policy is still the policy of the great English nation. When His Majesty sent us his gracious message of sympathy and later on of hope, what do you think he meant but sympathy for our political aspirations and hope for their ultimate fulfilment ? As late as the 8th day of October this year, His Excellency the Viceroy, addressing a large number of representative officials at the United Service Club of

Simla, said :

"England has instilled into this country the culture and civilisation of the West with all its ideals of liberty and self-respect. It is not enough for her now to consider only the material outlook of India. It is necessary for her to cherish the aspirations, of which she herself has sown the seed, and English officials are gradually awakening to the fact that high as were the aims and remarkable the achievements of their predecessors, a still nobler task lies before them in the present and the future in guiding the uncertain and faltering steps of Indian development along sure and safe paths. The new role of guide, philosopher and friend is opening before you and it is worthy of your greatest friends efforts. It requires in you gifts of imagination and sympathy, and imposes upon you self-sacrifice, for it means that slowly but surely you must divest yourselves of some of the power you have hitherto wielded. Let it be realised that great as has been England's mission in the past, she has a far more glorious task to fulfil in the future, in encouraging and guiding the political self-development of the people. The goal to which India may attain is still distant and there may be many vicissitudes in her path, but I look forward with confidence to a time when, strengthened by character and self-respect and bound by ties of affection and gratitude, India may be regarded as a true friend of the Empire and not merely as a trusty dependent. The day for the complete fulfilment of this ideal is not yet, but it is to this distant vista that the British official should turn his eyes, and he must grasp the fact that it is by his future success in this direction that British prestige and efficiency will be judged."

These noble words of Lord Hardinge, which must still be ringing in our ears, are not the idle speculations of an irresponsible enthusiast, but the well-considered pronouncement of a statesman who, after guiding the ship of state during a period of unprecedented storm and stress, sends forth this message both to his own countrymen and to us. Lest there be any among us of so little faith as to doubt the real meaning of those memorable words, lest there be any Englishman inclined to whittle down the meaning of this promise, I hope there will

be an authentic and definite proclamation with regard to which there will be no evasion, no misunderstanding possible. So far as we the people are concerned, there is no reason for mistrust, for this policy proclaimed so long ago and repeated so recently has been fruitful of innumerable beneficent results. Officials, even the highest, may sometimes have spoken or even acted in a different spirit, but England always did and does still consider it her glorious mission to raise this once great country from her fallen position to her ancient status among the nations of the earth, and she enjoins every English official in India to consider himself a trustee bound to make over his charge to the rightful owner the moment the latter attains to years of discretion.

But are there any among us who, while accepting His Excellency's message of hope, are disposed to demur to the qualification therein expressed, namely, that the goal is not yet ? If so, I do not hesitate to express my entire disagreement, because I would sooner take the risk of displeasing than injuring my beloved countrymen. I am fortified in my opinion when I find that almost every prominent leader of the Congress has laboured to impress upon all true lovers of our country that the path is long and devious and that we shall have to tread weary steps before we get to the promised land. "Day will not break the sooner because we get up before the twilight." The end will not come by impatience. I maintain that no true friend of India will place the ideal of self-government before us without this necessary qualification. It inevitably makes passionate youth, anxious to avoid the steep and weary path, take to dangerous and even fatal short-cuts, for it is unfortunately true that impetuous youth finds it easier to die for a glorious ideal than to live and work for it with steady patience and persistent self-sacrifice. I yield to none in my desire for self-government but I recognise that there is a wide gulf between desire and attainment.

One Goal, One Path

Let us argue out for ourselves freely and frankly the various ways by which we can obtain the priceless treasure of self-

government. It seems to me that it is possible only in one of the three following ways :

First, by way of a free gift from the British nation.

Second, by wresting it from them.

Third, by means of such progressive improvement in our mental, moral and material condition as will, on the one hand, render us worthy of it and, on the other, impossible for our rulers to withhold it.

Now, as to the first, the free gift. Even if the English nation were willing to make us an immediate free gift of full self-government—and those who differ most from the Congress are the first to deny the existence of such a willingness—I take leave to doubt whether the boon would be worth having as such, for it is a common place of a politics that nations like individuals must grow into freedom nothing is so baneful in political institutions as their prematurity : nor must we forget that India free can never be ancient India restored. Such a vision, as has been justly remarked, could only be realised if India free from the English could have stood in a tranquil solitude or in a sphere of absolute isolation, but unfortunately the hard facts of the modern world have to be faced and India, free from England, but without any real power of resistance, would be immediately in the thick of another struggle of nations.

As to the second, I doubt if the extremist of the extremists consider it feasible to win self-government immediately by means of a conflict with the British Power. Such a conflict is impossible, if not conceivable; and I cannot imagine any sane man thinking that assassinations of policemen and dacoities committed on peaceful un-offending citizens will do aught but retard progress towards our goal. Such acts, if they proceeded from any considerable section of the people, would only emphasise our absolute incompetence for self-government, which demands the highest qualities of patient preparation and of silent and unobtrusive work in every aspect of our social and political life. Fortunately, acts like those I have mentioned are reprobated throughout India. They may appeal to the perverted imagination

of misguided youth, but are abhorrent of us and alienate not only the sympathy of those Englishmen whose support would be invaluable to our cause, both in India and in England, but they provoke the bitterest resentment among our own people who naturally shrink from an ideal where lawlessness is likely to have sway. On your behalf and my own, I express my utmost and unqualified detestation of these lawless acts, and I fervently appeal to all sections of our people to express in unmistakable language their abhorrence of these dastardly crimes which besmirch the fare fame of our country and I pray to them so to co-operate with the authorities as to render their detection and punishment absolutely certain.

Brother delegates,—We are left, therefore, with the third alternative as the only means of attaining the goal of self-government. Before I deal with it, let me remind you of a parable in Mr. Edwin Bevan's thoughtful little book on Indian Nationalism. He likens the condition of our country to that of a man whose whole bodily frame, suffering from severe injuries and grievous lesions, has been put in a steel frame by a skilful surgeon. This renders it necessary for the injured man, as the highest duty to himself, to wait quietly and patiently in splints and bandages—even in a steel frame—until nature resumes her active processes. The knitting of the bones and the granulation of the flesh require time : perfect, quiet and repose, even under the severest pain, is necessary. It will not do to make too great haste to get well. An attempt to walk too soon will only make the matter worse, and, above all, the aid of the surgeon is indispensable and it is foolish to grudge the necessary fee.

When we ourselves have so far advanced under the guidance and protection of England as to be able not only to manage our own domestic affairs, but to secure internal peace and prevent external aggression, I believe that it will be as much the interest as the duty of England to concede the fullest autonomy to India. Political wiseacres tell us that history does not record any precedent in which a foreign nation has with its own hands freed from bondage a people which it has itself conquered. I will not pause to point out, what has been pointed out so often, that India was never conquered in the literal sense of the word,

and, as very properly observed by the late Sir John Seeley, India is not a possession of England in the sense of legally being a tributary to England any more than any of her colonies I will not wait to examine the cases of French Canada and the Boer Republics in S. Africa to whom free institutions have been granted. But has there been a situation before this in the history of mankind like that of India today ? Has there been a nation whose ideas of political morality have ever reached those of the great English Nation ? Has there been another nation which has fought so continuously and strenuously for the freedom and liberty of other nations as the English ? My faith is based not on emotion, not on unreasoning sentiment : it rests on the record of what has already been achieved by the undying labours of far-sighted English statesmen and noble-hearted Indian patriots, both those who are still working for the cause and those whose labours are done and whose spirits hover over us today and guide and inspire us.

The East and the West have met—not in vain. The invisible scribe who has been writing the most marvellous history that ever was written has not been idle. Those who have the discernment and inner vision to see will know that there is only one goal and there is only one path.

The regeneration and reconstruction of India can take place only under the guidance and control of England, and while we admit that the goal is not yet, we refuse to believe that it is so distant as to render it a mere vision of the imagination. We deprecate the impatience of those who imagine that we have only to stretch our hands to grasp the coveted prize. But we differ equally from those who think that the end is so remote as to be a negligible factor in the ordinary work of even present-day administration. It seems to me that, having fixed our goal, it is hardly necessary to attempt to define in concrete terms the precise relationship that will exit between India and England when the goal is reached. Whatever may be the connection of India with England in the distant future, her impression on India could never be effaced and the inter-communion of the spirit and the breathing of new life into India by England will

be a permanent factor which could never be discounted. Autonomy within the Empire is the accepted political faith of the Congress, and I find it difficult to believe that our patriotism and our love of country cannot be reconciled to the picture of the future which generous statesmen like Lord Haldane draw, in which Englishmen and Indians will be fellow-citizens of a common empire and of a common and splendid heritage, all of us bringing our special talents to bear co-operatively for the common good of the whole. For the attainment of this great ideal, our first great duty is the exercise of the difficult but indispensable virtue of patience. There is no royal road to that goal and we must all patiently, persistently and strenuously co-operate in all measures necessary for that purpose. Some of these can be undertaken only by the Government, others will depend on ourselves alone, but none will bear fruit without a spirit of mutual trust, toleration and forbearance.

In order to foster this spirit so far as we, the people of India are concerned, it is vitally necessary to admit them, in an ever-increasing measure, to direct and active participation in the higher work of government in all its branches, civil as well as military, executive as well as judicial, administrative as well as legislative. It is a cruel calumny which asserts that, when asking for the expansion of the powers of our Legislative Councils, for the appointment of Indians to the Imperial and Provincial Executive Councils, for the admission of a larger number of Indians to the Indian Civil Service and all other branches of the higher public services, the Indian National Congress asks only to honours and appointments for the members of the educated classes. It may be that some of those who still persist in repeating this libel on the intelligence of this country fail to grasp the well-known facts, namely, that Congress leaders like Messrs Telang, Tyabji, Krishnaswamy Iyer and others accepted high office only at considerable personal sacrifice and that others had to refuse because they could not afford to make the necessary sacrifice. These critics have neglected to read the literature of the Congress. In any case, they have missed the point of it all, namely, that these measures are advocated only as means to an end. They are valuable chiefly because they concede the

demand of the people for direct and active participation in the work of Government, not merely as tools and agents, but as members of the Government itself. They are valuable only in so far as they tend to identify the people with the Government, and enable them to think of the Government as their own and not as as an alien bureaucracy imposed on an unwilling people by a conquering nation. We can afford to treat the taunts of these unfriendly critics with contempt, but there is another school of critic whose counsels are no more sound. These insist on the impotence of the Reformed Legislative Councils, whose resolutions [they ridicule as mere pious wishes. They see no good in the powers of interpellation and discussion of the budget. They treat the admission of one Indian into each of existing Executive Councils as a matter of no consequence, because it has not produced immediate or far-reaching changes in the ordinary routine of administration. They insist that even a liberal and philosophic historian like Viscount Bryce has pointed out that no more in India than in the Roman Empire has there been any question of establishing free institutions, either for the country as a whole or for any particular province; and that of Council Reforms of 1861, 1892 and 1909 were merely intended to give opportunities and means for the expression of Indian opinion and not to give any real power to the people. Well, it does not require much political acumen to discover that we in India are yet a long way off from free institutions and that the reforms so far effected have not yielded any real power to the people either in the Imperial or in the Provincial Councils. But it is my firm belief that the privileges already acquired, if used with industry and moderation and tact, will in no distant future receive considerable enlargement, and we must continue to press for further expansion in all the directions I have mentioned undeterred by the criticism of the one and the cynicism of the other. We shall not continue to urge the enlargement of the powers and modifications of the constitution of the Legislative Councils. We shall continue to ask for larger and yet larger admission of Indians to the higher ranks of the public services in all its branches and we shall claim these not as mere concessions but as a gradual fulfilment of solemn pledges for the progressive nationalisation of the

government of the country. We shall continue our labours till really free institutions are established for the whole of the country, not by any sudden or revolutionary change, but by gradual evolution and cautious progress.

What the Congress Wants

When I accepted my nomination for this chair I knew—as all of you must have known—that I was not likely to be able to suggest any specific measures of reform other than those so long advocated by this Congress. But I felt—I trust without undue presumption, that having been in the inner Councils of the Government for however short a time, it was peculiarly my duty to act as your spokesman on this occasion. It is in that belief that I appeal to the British nation to declare their ungrudging approval of the goal to which we aspire, to declare their inflexible resolution to equip India for her journey to that goal and to furnish her escort on the long and weary road. Such a declaration will be the most distinguished way of marking their appreciation of India's services and sacrifices—her loyalty and her devotion to the Empire. Such a declaration will touch the heart and appeal to the imagination of the people far more than any mere specific political reform. These latter may fail short of the high expectations raised by utterances of the responsible English statesmen as to the future place of India in the Empire and they may cause disappointment and not carry conviction to the minds of the people that the pace of the administrative reforms will be reasonably accelerated and that henceforth it will be only a question of patient preparation. The most appropriate opportunity for such a declaration will be the moment when the victory of England and her Allies will establish for ever the triumph of free institutions over old-world doctrines of military absolutism.

Let me not be misunderstood, I do not say that all that is wanted, all that would satisfy us, is a mere declaration of policy; what I do say is that there should be a frank and full statement of the policy of Government as regards the future of India, so that hope may come where despair holds sway and faith where doubt spreads its darkening shadow, and I ask that

steps should be taken to move towads self-government by the gradual development of popular control over all departments of Government and by the removal of disabilities and restrictions under which we labour both in our own country and in other parts of the British Empire.

I have great pleasure in availing myself of this opportunity to acknowledge with gratitude two recent measures which, though not exactly steps towards self-government, amount to some recognition of India's place in the Empire. The first, thanks to the statesmanlike efforts of Lord Hardinge, is the partial amelioration of the condition of the Indian emigrants in S. Africa, and the other is the acceptance by Lord Hardinge's Government of my friend the Hon. Mr. Shafi's resolution for an official representation of India at the Imperial Conference. I would, however, venture to suggest that in addition to the official representative, one or two of the Indian Princes who have rendered such conspicuous service to the Empire might fittingly represent the great Continent of India. The delegation of one or two distinguished Indian Chiefs to the Imperial Conference will, in addition to other honours no doubt in store for them, be a just recognition of their pre-eminent services and will gratify public opinion throughout the length and breadth of India.

Coming to domestic politics, I do not think it necessary that I should on the present occasion deal in detail with the various concrete measures which the Congress advocates as an effective advance towards self-government on lines suited to India's special requirements. A decisive advance towards provincial autonomy, the liberalisation of the Council Regulations, establishment of elective as opposed to non-official majorities, an increase of their powers of control, specially in regard to finance, a larger representation of Indians in the various executive Councils as also in the Council of the Secretary of State, the admission of larger numbers of Indians to all the higher branches of the public services the long-delayed separation of judicial and executive functions, the abolition of indentured labour and the improvement of the position of Indians in other parts of the Empire—these are reforms which have long been urged and

which will be dealt with by you, I have no doubt, so far as you think necessary. I am afraid, however, most of them must stand over for adjustment till peace is in sight. For myself, I will be content with dealing as shortly as I can with three specific matters which have become increasingly urgent and with regard to which there is a practical unanimity of opinion. They are :

Firstly—the question of commissions in the army and military training for the people.

Secondly—The extension of local self-government.

Thirdly—the development of our commerce and our industries including agriculture.

Commissions in the Army and Military Training

There can be, I venture to think, no true sense of citizenship where there is no sense of responsibility for the defence of one's own country. "If there is trouble others will quiet it down. If there is riot, others will subdue it. If there is a danger, others will face it. If our country is in peril, others will defend it." When a people feel like this, it indicates that they have got to a stage when all sense of civic responsibility has been crushed out of them and the system which is responsible for this feeling is inconsistent with the self-respect of normal human beings.

I shall be the first to acknowledge that various steps have been and are being taken by the Government to promote the right spirit of self-help in the country, but I feel and I feel strongly that hitherto the Government has not only ignored but has put positive obstacles in the way of the people acquiring or retaining a spirit of national self-help in this the most essential respect.

For what is the present condition of things ? Except certain warlike races like the Sikhs and Rajputs, the people generally are debarred from receiving any kind of military training. Not only are they not allowed enlistment in the ranks of His Majesty's Army, but they are even precluded from joining any volunteer corps. Even with regard to the classes of men—Sikhs and Raj-

puts, Gurkhas and Pathans, etc.—who are taken into the regular army for the simple reason that the number of English troops is not in itself sufficient to maintain peace and order in this country even with reference to these classes it is an inflexible rule that though they now obtain the highest badge of valour *viz*, the Victoria Cross, not one of them can receive a Commission in His Majesty's Army, irrespective of birth or bravery, education or efficiency.

While the humblest European and Eurasian and even the West Indian Negro has the right to carry arms, the law of the land denies even to the most law-abiding and respectable Indian the privilege of possessing or carrying arms of any description except as a matter of special concession and indulgence often depending on the whim and caprice of unsympathetic officials.

To my mind the mere statement of the present system ought to be sufficient to secure its condemnation.

Let me proceed to state shortly what changes we consider essential to remedy this state of things.

1st. We ask for the right to enlist in the regular army, irrespective of race or province of origin, but subject only to prescribed tests of physical fitness.

2nd. We ask that the commissioned ranks of the Indian Army should be thrown open to all classes of His Majesty's subjects, subject to fair, reasonable and adequate physical and educational tests. We ask that a military college or colleges should be established in India where proper military training can be received by those of our countrymen who will have the good fortune to receive His Majesty's Commission.

3rd. We ask that all classes of His Majesty's subjects should be allowed to join as volunteers, subject of course again to such rules and regulations as will ensure proper control and discipline, and

4th. We ask that the invidious distinctions under the Arm's Act should be removed. This has no real connection with the

three previous claims, but I deal with it together with the others as all these disabilities are attempted to be justified on the same ground of political expediency.

Let us pause for a moment and consider the objections that are generally brought forward against the first three proposals.

As to the right to join the ranks, irrespective of race or province of origin, objections are put forward, firstly that not all the races of India provide good fighting material and that many of them lack the physical courage necessary for the Army. And, secondly, that many of them are neither willing nor anxious to join the ranks or to enter the army in any capacity.

The last may be dealt with in a few words. We are asking for a right, and if it turns out that some of us and even all of us are not willing to avail ourselves of that right.—well, there will be no compulsion on them to do so, and nobody will be the worse off because of the right. On the contrary, it will remove a grievance bitterly felt and loudly complained of and will redound to the credit of Government.

As regards the first objection, *viz.*, the want of necessary martial spirit in certain classes or races, it requires more serious consideration. The argument is this : the country can afford to keep as a standing army only a certain number of trained soldiers and officers and it must get the best it can for the money it spends, and if certain races are unfit by reason of inherent want of courage for the profession of arms, the state would naturally select its soldiers from other classes. So say our opponents.

Taking it at its full strength, this argument has its limitation. For you cannot govern a State on exactly the same principles as you manage a shop. You may get better value for your money by getting as your soldier an Afridi or a Pathan or any non-British subjects, but by excluding the Parsi, or the Madrasi, or the Bengali you create a feeling of grievance, if not of actual resentment, which is certain to cause serious embarrassment in the work of general administration. You render it impossible for the excluded classes to consider themselves as equal subjects and

citizens responsible for the defence of the country, and you fail to foster that spirit of self-help and that sense of self-respect among those very classes which is essential to attain the goal of imperial unity.

Hitherto I have proceeded upon the assumption that some of the races in India are lacking in the physical courage necessary for the profession of arms. But, I ask, is it a correct hypothesis? Is is true that the Bangali—I am taking him as a type only—has not and will never have the requisite physical courage? The theory was started by Macaulay in his too sweeping condemnation of the people of the Gangetic delta, forgetting that the Bengal peasantry has always been a sturdy and virile class, particularly in tracts not touched by malaria. But take even the professional or educated classes in Bengal. A good many of them, who enlisted under conditions of great personal sacrifice, are at the present moment working in Mesopotamia as an Ambulance Crops, and I am confident all British officers in that theatre of war from the General in Command downwards will tell you that not a single man in that Corps has proved himself if deficient either in physical courage or in endurance.

Take another example nearer home. There is a body of public servants much misunderstood and therefore very often much maligned. I known there is a prejudice against them. I refer to the Bengali officers of the CID of the Police. Ask any Englishman in Bengal you like, from His Excellency the Governor downwards, and I am sure he will tell you there is not one among those officers who does not unflinchingly face death daily and hourly for the sake of duty and loyalty and let me add, that he does so, often in spite of much obloquy and great discouragement.

I take leave to point out, therefore, that it is not correct at any rate at the present time, to assert of any sections of the Indian people that they are wanting in such physical courage and manly virtues as to render them incapable of bearing arms. But even if it were so, is it not the obvious duty of England so to train them as to remove this incapacity as they are trying to

reason to believe it is that it is English rule which has brought them to such a pass ? England has ruled this country for considerably over 150 years now, and surely it cannot be a matter of pride to her that at the end of this period the withdrawal of her rule would mean chaos and anarchy and would leave the country an easy prey to any foreign adventurers. There are some of our critics who never fail to remind us that if the English were to leave the country today, we would have to wire to them to come back before they got as far as Aden. Some even enjoy the grim joke that were the English to withdraw now, there would be neither a rupee nor a virgin left in some parts of the country. For my part, I can conceive of no more scathing indictment of the results of British Rule. A superman might gloat over the spectacle of the conquest of might over justice, and over righteousness, but I am much mistaken if the British nation, fighting now as ever for the cause of justice and freedom and liberty, will consider it as other than discreditable to itself in the highest degree that, after nearly two centuries of British Rule, India has been brought today to the same emasculated condition as the Britons were in the beginning of the 5th century when the Roman legions left the English shores in order to defend their own country against the Huns, Goths and other barbarian hordes.

In asking, therefore, for the right of military training, we are only to seeking to remedy the results I have described. We are seeking to regain our lost self-respect and to strengthen our sense of civic responsibility. We are seeking to regain the right to defend our homes and hearths against possible invaders should the strong protecting arm of England be ever withdrawn from our country. It is no mere sentiment that compels us to demand this inalienable right of all human beings, though sentiment has its undoubted place in the scheme of every government. Some day our other, or right arm may be called upon to defend all that man holds most precious. For who will venture to prophesy that sooner or later there may not be another such conflict as is now convulsing the world, when there may be new alliances and fresh combinations and when England may not have the same allies and advantages as she has now ?

I have endeavoured to prove that neither of the objections which are generally put forward against our claims to enlistment in the army is tenable. I have tried to show the justice as well as the necessity of our demands.

In the face of what has happened in the present war, it is no longer correct to say what Lord Bryce said in 1912. This is what Lord Bryce said : "To England, however, apart from the particular events which might have created the snapping of the tie and apart from the possible loss of a market, severance from India need involve no lasting injury. To be mistress of a vast country, whose resources for defence need to be supplemented by her own, adds indeed to her frame but does not add to her strength. England was great and powerful before she owned a yard of land in Asia, and might be great and powerful again with no more foothold in the East than would be needed for the naval prestige which protects her commerce."

The resources for defence which India possesses even now do add to the strength of England as has been so amply proved in the present war. This strength could be multiplied a hundredfold were our claims ever conceded. For, if the people of India are allowed and trained to bear arms, what nation is there on the face of the earth whose strength would compare with that of England ? Nor is there any reason for apprehension that such concessions would be a source of internal danger. If the Sikh, the Gurkha, the Maharatta and the Pathan—good and valiant soldiers as they are—are found to be loyal and law-abiding, there is no reason to think that the case would be otherwise with the other races when admitted to the same status and privileges. Besides, we are only asking that the privileges are to be granted subject only to such conditions, rules, regulations and safeguards as to ensure proper discipline and control.

In the case of volunteers also, they will be similarly subject to all proper safeguards and restrictions which will be for the Government to lay down.

Subject to such safeguards, the ranks of volunteer corps will afford, without any risk whatever to the Government or the peo-

ple, an outlet for restless energies which now find doubtful and dangerous channels.

In making these demands, I know I raise as large a question as the formation of a national militia. I desire frankly and freely to meet the criticism that such an army, with a preponderance of the Indian element, may be turned against the British Government. I venture to submit in reply that anarchists and seditionists may succeed in winning over an ignorant and mercenary army, but they will never succeed in winning over a truly national army, drawn from a people made increasingly loyal by the spread of education and liberal self-governing institutions. Of course, I am not suggesting that the Army should be nationalised in a day any more than that the government of the country should be nationalised by a stroke of the pen. But I urge in all humility that the time has come for making the beginning of a National Army in India. The tremendous shock with which every part of our world-wide Empire has realised the prime necessity of maintaining an army large enough for its defence and protection renders it imperative that a strong National Army should be raised and maintained in every part of India.

The opening of a military career will fire the imagination and stimulate the virility of India in a way that nothing else can do. And is too much for India to expect to be treated in the same way as Russia treats the subject races—especially after the proof she has given of the prowess of her sons and their devotion and their loyalty to the imperial standard.

Reason and convenience, justice and necessity, all support every one of the claims I have ventured to put forward; and if a definite advance is not made in these respects, it will be difficult to believe that the war has changed the angle of vision of our rulers. It will be impossible to retain faith in what was proclaimed by the present Premier Mr. Asquith "that the Empire rests, not upon the predominance, artificial and superficial, of race of class, but upon the loyal affection of free communities built upon the basis of equal rights."

I now come to the last but not the least important of our

over vast areas. So I would plead to you to face this drudgery. It is drudgery, make no mistake ; understand the details of local administration and understand how to manage your own drains, particularly your waterworks. Those are the alphabets of self-government and unless you go through that drudgery, no amount of enthusiasm and love for the country will make your administration a success."

No less emphatic was the advice of one of our most revered leaders of the Congress, Sir Subramania Iyer, as President of the Reception Committee of the last Congress. If this is the view of our leaders, the views of Government are no less clear. We need not go further back than the memorable Resolution of 1882 of Lord Ripon. You will remember what a generous scheme of local self-government was there laid down "to foster sedulously the small beginnings of independent political life." It will take me long, and it will hardly be profitable, to trace the history of the failure, the dismal failure, of that scheme. But I may be pardoned for pointing out that the failure was due neither to the Government of India, nor to the local Government, nor yet to the civil service in India, as is sometimes hastily assumed, but, so far at any rate as Bengal is concerned, to the whole framework of the scheme being changed by the Secretary of State for India in Council, in spite of the protests and objections of the authorities in this country.

Lord Ripon's Resolution laid down the following fundamental principles :

1. That the Local Governments should maintain throughout the country a network of Local Boards charged with definite duties and entrusted with definite funds.
2. That the jurisdiction of the Primary Boards should be so limited in area as to ensure both local knowledge and local interest on the part of each of the members.
3. That there should be a preponderance of non-official members to be chosen by election wherever possible.
4. That Government control on these bodies should be exercised from without rather than from within non-

official elected chairmen acting, wherever practicable, as chairman of the Local Boards.

The Decentralisation Commission in their report dealt with the matter at some length and also made some definite recommendations.

Lord Morley in his Reform Despatch dated 27th November, 1908, said : "The village in India has been the fundamental and indestructible unit of the social system surviving the downfall of dynasty after dynasty. I desire," said Lord Morley to the Viceroy, "Your Excellency to consider the best way of carrying out a policy that would make the village a starting point of public life."

We have next the Resolution of Lord Hardinge's Government dated 1st of May, 1915, dealing with and assenting to many of the recommendations of the Decentralisation Commission. We are, therefore, in agreement with Government as to the importance of local self-government. It is a matter of further general agreement that the re-development of the village as an administrative unit has been brought within the range of practical politics by the spread of the co-operative movement. I find from the report of Sir E. Maclagan's Committee on Co-operation in India that primary societies have grown from 832 in 1906-07 to 14,566 in 1913-14, the number of members from 88,582 to 661,859 and the amount of working capital from nil to 46,427,842 rupees. The report states : "no one reading these figures can fail to be struck by the magnitude which the growth has already attained or to be convinced that the movement has taken firm root. Societies are now so spread over all parts of India and the advantages which their members are obtaining are so patent that it is impossible to doubt that the movement will eventually attain dimensions compared to which its present size will appear negligible. As a consequence, there will undoubtedly arise, through the medium of co-operation, a powerful organisation formed of those agricultural classes, who are at present inarticulate through want of education and cohesion."

Local Self-Government, supplemented by the spread of the

co-operative movement, will gradually solve many of our most difficult problems—such as primary education, small industries, improved agriculture, indebtedness of the peasantry, rural sanitation and so forth, and to this we must devote our best energies and attention in the immediate future, bearing in mind that we have got to build from the village upwards.

Here is a vast field in which we can in co-operation with the Government work heart and soul for the amelioration of the condition of the masses of our people. It has been forcibly pointed out by that good friend of India Sir Daniel Hamilton that the development of the co-operative movement in the villages requires thousands of men. The civilians who have been incharge of this movement have done wonders considering their numbers. They deserve the very highest praise, but their numbers are far too few. 12,000 village banks seem a large number to have been started in 10 years, but, at the same rate of progress, India will not have been covered with village banks for another 400 or 50 years. Is the great industry of India, agriculture, to wait all this time before it is provided with a banking system ? Are the 250 millions of Indian cultivators to go on paying 30, 40 and 50 per cent, for their finance for hundreds of years to come, while the rest of the civilised world gets all the money it wants at 3, 4 and 5 per cent ? What India wants more men to develop co-operative credit and she must have them. The men are there, hundreds of them being turned out of her colleges every year with nothing to do, with nothing to look forward to. And every Indian will join in the expression of the hope that we shall soon see established in every province of India schools for the training in co-operative methods and co-operative finance of the best of India's young men, who will carry the co-operative flag into every village of India, and wage war on the darkness and the ignorance and the poverty which exist today and which are in a large measure due to want of co-operation. In the same connection, my friend Sir Theodore Morrison has gathered from official reports highly interesting illustrations which Co-operative Credit Societies are giving to the self-culture of the people. In one instance a man of idle age learnt to read and write slowly to

keep the accounts of the bank of which he was President, and, though his first efforts were painfully hard to decipher, he persevered to such good purpose that his books are now the best kept in the Punjab. In another village, the President and officers of the bank had acquired such influence that they had reconstituted the ancient authority of the village Panchayat for settling local disputes, with the result that litigation, which had been the curse of the place before, has now much decreased.

While I gratefully acknowledge the efforts now being made by the Government in all provinces for well and truly laying the foundations of local self-government, I cannot help regretting that the Resolution of the Government of India of last summer does not go far enough or even as far as Lord Ripon's Resolution of 1882 in the direction of recommending less official control and a greater extension of the elective principle, both as regards members and chairmen of District Boards. Let not our rulers forget that "self-government implies the right to go wrong for it is nobler for a nation as for a man to struggle towards excellence with its own natural force and vitality, however blindly and vainly, than to live in irreproachable decency under expert guidance from without."

It is not possible for us any more now than it was for Lord Ripon in 1882 to lay down any hard and fast rules which shall be of universal application in a country so vast and in its local circumstances so varied as British India. All we can do is to ask that the principles laid down by Lord Ripon of undying memory should be generously given effect to *viz.*, distinct funds with distinct duties, not too large admistrative areas, more and more of elections (both of members and chairmen) and less and less of official control from within. From our side, schemes for different provinces have been put forward from 1870 downwards. I will mention only those of the late Mr. Malabari, Mr. R.C. Dutt and Mr. Gokhale. Schemes have also been prepared from the official side in almost all the different provinces—Bengal, Bombay, Madras, the U.P., the Punjab and the Central Provinces. It ought not therefore to be difficult in the existing state of the land to make an effective advance at once on an adjustment of these different schemes—and, if it is made in the

right spirit, I feel confident that the ultimate success of local self-government in India is absolutely certain.

It is for us to co-operate whole-heartedly with the officials for the success of the different measures of local self-government which are already being undertaken in the different provinces. Let us not assume, as we are sometimes unfortunately inclined to do, that the civilians will be lath to part with the powers which they have hitherto possessed. Let us injustice to the Indian Civil Service remember that the members of that distinguished body have never spared themselves in the service of India. Let me also implore my friends of the Indian Civil Service not to commit the mistake of looking upon the educated Indian as out of touch with his less favoured countrymen or trying to keep the latter down for his own personal profit and advancement. Let us look upon each other as willing and necessary so adjutors for the advancement of India in every department. Let us not rail at the mote in our brother's eye without considering the beam that is in our own. Let neither of us indulge in prejudice or fretfulness, but work in friendly co-operation for the progress and prosperity of the teeming millions of India.

Development of Our Commerce, Industries and Agriculture

Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to whether India is growing richer or poorer under British Rule, there is none with regard to her extreme poverty. And there can never be political contentment without material prosperity shared by all classes of the people. And what the District Administration Committee of Bengal quotes with approval, as regards Bengal, namely, that our industrial backwardness is a great political danger, applies in fact and in reality to the whole of India.

No one will be disposed to question the fact of this amazing backwardness. Rich in all the resources of nature, India continues to be the poorest country in the civilised world. The result is that an unhealthy political activity has arisen among certain classes of the people. As the District Administration Committee of Bengal says : "This unrest compels Government to take repressive measures,—a regrettable necessity which makes

all the more desirable the adoption of those remedial and beneficent measures which will afford the most certain cure of the worst evils of the situation while proving that Government is no less determined to create prosperity than to maintain order."

What are these "remedial measures" ? Technical schools and even technological institutes are not enough. These have in all modern States generally followed and not preceded the development of industries and manufactures. The first step taken by Japan was to start factories, either financed by Government or with Government control and managed by experts from abroad.

In India alone, with the exception of spasmodic efforts, the Government adheres to the exploded *laissez faire* doctrine that the development of commerce and industry is not within the province of the State.

It is high time that this policy were abandoned! The necessity of carrying on demonstration work in agriculture, the greatest industry of the country, on a commercial scale, is admitted by all, and it is only where this principle has been put into practice that agricultural improvements have been taken up by the people. Similar results will follow if the same policy is pursued with regards to other iudustries and manufactures. They have followed whenever such experiments have been undertaken by the Government as in the case of aluminium and chrome-tanning in Madras.

The time is singularly opportune. The war has put an end to the enormous imports of German and Austrian goods and Japan is already making great efforts to capture the trade which by right ought to be ours.

I have neither the knowledge nor the capacity to go into details, and I rejoice that the experts at the Congress of Indian Commerce were able to point out specific ways and means by which the Government can assist us in this respect. But I will venture to say that the solution of the problem can no longer be safely postponed. And it will test, as no other question has

done, the altruism of English statesmanship, for in promoting and protecting Indian industries it may become necessary,—it will become necessary to sacrifice the interests even of English manufacturers.

A Programme of Self-Help

Brother delegates—Hitherto I have been dealing with measures that can be undertaken only by the Government, and in doing so I have incidentally mentioned the various ways in which we ourselves must act and move forward. Indeed, the field for such work is so vast as to render it impossible of definition. Primary education, improvement of agriculture and industrial expansion, improvement of rural as well as urban sanitation there is work enough and to spare for every one of us. And how much could we not do by our own efforts, if only we cared to organise ourselves. I venture to suggest that we, in this connection, should lay down a constructive and continuous programme of work in all these directions as a part of our Congress activities, and that Provincial and District Committees all over the country should occupy themselves throughout the year in some one or more of these manifold directions, so as to show the achievement of some result, however small, however, insignificant, at the end of each year. For instance, while waiting for the establishment of a system of free and compulsory primary education let each District branch of the Provincial Congress Committee be able to show that they have either directly or indirectly contributed to the establishment of ten, or even five, or even two primary schools in their district during one year. Similarly, we might very usefully and profitably extend our activity in supplementing the work of the District Local Boards and in spreading among our rural population some elementary knowledge of hygiene and sanitation and in organising relief for local and provincial distress, if and when need be.

For this kind of self-help, the first requisite is to raise funds for the propaganda. Are we willing to do so ? I confess to a feeling of diffidence, for though friends and leaders like Allan Octavian Hume have repeatedly asked us to make permanent

provision for the work of the Congress, both here and in England, their advice seems to have fallen on absolutely deaf ears. Sir S. Iyer suggested last year that a body of Congress supporters should be brought into existence, each member thereof paying a subscription say of Rs. 25 per annum. He very modestly presumed that it would not be difficult to find in each province a few hundred of such subscribers, and he suggested that the funds so raised should be held and administered by a few trustees duly appointed, who should further be clothed with a corporate character by registration under the law so as to make them really competent to receive and hold, for the Congress, donations and endowments, which he hoped would not be long in coming. That is still to come. Let us at this Congress, wipe out the reproach that moderate Indian opinion only devotes a few days to public business in order to have the right during the rest of the year not to think any more about it. Let us engrave in our hearts the advices which stop foolish quarrels and depressing rivalries, substitute close and loyal co-operation and reasoned and constant action, give freely your time, your money and your hearts; speak little and do much." Let us begin to deal with the concrete problems of civic life on the basis of ascertained and accepted facts, and in order that our beloved institutions, the Congress, may be a living actuality, let us begin by collecting first the funds which are indispensable for the carrying on of its work. It is my hope that this Congress may be a fertilising stream of steady effort fed by the spirit of service and sacrifice and spreading far and wide the blessings of peace and prosperity. If in speaking to you today—and I have spoken freely and frankly—I have succeeded in the smallest possible measure in advancing the object of the Indian National Congress and in appealing successfully, in however small a degree, to the better mind both of England and India, I shall consider my humble labours to have been more than amply recompensed.

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GROWTH OF NATIONALISM FROM WITHIN*

Brother and Sister Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It was Lord Curzon who on a memorable occasion said that it was not given to "an Indian corporal to carry the Field-Marshal's baton in his knapsack", but here an Indian provate, recruited somewhere in the seventies who, after a few years' training, joined his colours but never rose above the rank of a subaltern, has today after nearly 35 years of active service for that baton thrust into his hand which, however, he neither deserved nor dreamt of in all his life. I use no language of mere convention when I say, that trying and momentous as the present situation is, I sincerely wished that at this turning point in the history of the national movement, the presidential chair of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress had been offered to a more capable person who might have not only inspired greater confidence, but by his superior tact and judgment safely steered it clear of all shoals and bars that still lie before it and successfully led it into port after a perilous voyage extending over thirty years: I wished it had been permitted to me to stand aside and gratify the wishes of a section of my countrymen with those ardent hopes and sanguine expectations for the rapid advancement of the country I am in the fullest sympathy. But it ought to be remembered that the chosen spokesman of a great representative assembly like the Congress is merely an accredited agent whose individuality is more or less merged in the body politic and whose freedom of action is largely controlled by that body. Even his voice, as I understand it, is bound not to reflect his personal *ipse dixits*,

*Presidential address delivered by Ambica Charan Mazumdar at the Lucknow Congress held on 26-30 December, 1916.

but echo the reasoned feelings and sentiments of those whom he seeks to represent. In every organised movement the individual counts for nothing and the voice of the majority cannot but be respected under a constitutional fiction as the voice of the whole. In a case like the present, one is often precluded even from giving due consideration to his fitness or unfitness for the great task which is thrust upon him. It was the country's mandate in the country's cause which demanded unquestioning submission. The decision as well as the responsibility rested with the country, the duty resting on me. I am neither so vain, nor so foolish as to imagine for a moment, that the great honour bestowed upon me is intended for a personal distinction. I am under no such delusion. I am fully conscious that it is the undemocratic spirit of this national organisation which has, in its natural evolution, sought to vindicate itself by drawing out an old servant of the cause from his retirement in an obscure corner of the country to fill the presidential chair in the dim twilight of the evening of his life.

Gentlemen, if I do not begun by offering you the customary thanks, it is because thanks pre-suppose some claim to receive a gift, and I frankly confess that I have not sufficient confidence in myself to thank you for the very difficult and delicate position in which you have placed me. However, lest you anybody else should think that I am "poor even in thanks." I thank you with all the warmth and fervour of a devoted heart for the great honour—the greatest in the gift of the country—which you have conferred on me by calling me to preside over the deliberations of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress at Lucknow, the historic capital of Oudh which played such an important part in the early history of British rule in India —Lucknow, the Koshala of the ancients, the city built by Assif ud-Dowlah, and adorned by his successors with magnificent mosques, mausoleums and the imambaras and crowned with gilded towers, minarets and cupolas—Lucknow, the centre of the great tornado which swept over India in 1857 in which the brave Lawrence and Nicholson fell and where the gallant Havelock sleeps embalmed in the thrilling memories of a historic siege. Gentlemen, I think I have one indisputable

claim to your just and generous consideration: if you have in your choice placed me in this responsible position, you are in common fairness bound to extend to me a reasonable amount of support and indulgence so as to enable me to discharge my duties with some measures of success.

Tribute to the Dead

Ladies and gentlemen, while most people count their gains, we have to count our losses at the end of every year. How sad it is to contemplate that scarcely a year passes away without leaving us the poorer in the ranks of our public men: How fast are the dear old familiar faces on this Congress platform vanishing into the void. Not to speak of the serious losses which the country sustained in her earlier bereavements, only last year we lost three of our tried veterans, the brilliant, the versatile, the indomitable Pherozeshah Mancharjee Mehta, the saintly and devoted Gopal Krishna Gokhale and that silent and steadfast worker who was one of the brave 72 who inaugurated the Congress at Bombay in 1885—Ganga Prasad Varma. And before this old, rickety globe of ours complete another revolution, that "fell sergeant strict in his arrest" has snatched away three of our brave comrades whose loyalty to the country was equalled only by their spirit of self-sacrifice, and whose devotion to duty was surpassed only by their extraordinary capacity for work. G. Subramania Iyer, the founder of the *Hindu*, the organiser of the Mahajana Sabha, the editor of the *Swudeshmitran*, who was the first to lead the plough and turn the first son on the Congress soil by moving the first resolution of the First Indian National Congress, may well be called the maker of Modern Madras; while Daji Abaji Khare, who was for about eight years loyally and devotedly associated with our esteemed friend and veteran leader, the Hon'ble Mr. D.E. Wacha, as a Joint General Secretary to the Congress, was a man of whom any community might be justly proud and whose untimely death is an irreparable loss to the country and the Congress. Lastly, it is with feelings of profound grief which has not yet been touched by the healing hand of time that I must mention the passing of our gifted

and distinguished countrymen, one of my predecessors in the chair to which you have called me today, Pandit Bishan Narayan Dhar. Brother delegates as the first citizen of Lucknow and the Chairman of Reception Committee, his voice should have been the first to be heard in this pandal this afternoon in eloquent welcome extended to us all, but it was not to be, and his voice has been hushed in the great silence, and the duty remains with us of offering our respectful tribute to his departed worth. Yet another eminent Indian has recently passed away, who, though not in the Congress was with the Congress all his life. Mr. B.L. Gupta belonged to that distinguished triumvirate who formed the vanguard of the Indian Civil Service in this country and it was he who was the originator, if not the author, of the Ilbert Bill. Two of this triumvirate have passed away, while, thank God, the third who having consecrated his life to the service of the Motherland, still retains the command which he has held for the last 30 years. May Surendranath Banerjee be long spared to lead us and serve the country.

We have had very few friends in England and how fast is their rank thinning away. Sir Henry Cotton who, both in and out of Parliament, was one of the bravest and trust champions of the Indian people and who had cheerfully sacrificed his own interests for those of India, passed away last year amidst the universal lamentations of a grateful people who had most need of such a man at the present juncture; while shortly afterwards the great Labour Leader, Mr. Keir Hardie, who made India's cause his own and like Hampden with dauntless breast fought for suffering humanity, went to his eternal rest, creating a void in the ranks of our friends which is not likely to be soon filled up. We are, however, grateful to kind Providence that the Saint of Versova and the sage of Meridith are still spared to us to guide us and cheer us with occasional messages of hope and confidence. How the brave and the mighty have fallen and how many more have yet to fall in the weary march through the desert before we can reach even the threshold of the Promised Land. But dead or alive, they cannot be completely lost to us if we

can only realise that their mighty spirits are ever hovering over us and in their unerring vision silently guiding us in the onward march, encouraging us in our success and comforting us in the hours of our despair and despondency.

Re-United Congress

Gentlemen, even the darkest cloud is said to have its silver living, and in this vale of sorrow, there is hardly any misfortune which has not both a positive and negative side. If the United Congress was buried in the debris of the old French Garden at Surat, it is re-born today in the Kaiser Bagh of Lucknow, the garden of the generous King Wajid Ali Shah. After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the widerness of misunderstandings and the mazes of unpleasant controversies, each widening the breach and lengthening the chain of separation, both the wings of the Indian Nationalist Party have come to realise the fact that united they stand, but divided they fall, and brothers have at last met brothers and embraced each other with the gush and ardour, peculiar to a reconciliation after a long separation. Blessed are the peace-makers. Honour, all honour to those who in this suicidal civil war held the olive branch of peace, and glory to the patriotic good sense of the belligerents on both sides who, having realised their true position and responsibility have, at a psychological moment, so wisely buried their hatchets and closed their ranks.

There are occasional differences even in the best regulated families and how much wider must be the scope of differences it the vast political field of a country like ours where the people have so little of the power of initiation in their hands and where the causes of misunderstanding and consequent vexation and disappointment are so numerous and so irritating. Nothing succeeds like success and nothing so much disturbs the equanimity of the public mind and embitters public feeling as failure and in a common cause the failure of one method easily gives a handle to exaggerate the importance of an opposite view, though, if the position were reversed, the result might have been still worse. But if there be

honesty of motive and singleness of purpose, the widest divergence of opinion need neither frighten nor irritate any reasonable mind. Action and reaction is the law of nature's evolution. Struggle represents animation as stillness indicates stagnation, and thus even the muddy water of a rushing stream is ever more wholesome that the transparent water of a stagnant pool. In politics healthy opposition indicates the vitality of national life and the disturbances and disruptions that occasionally take place in the life of a nation serve only to clear and purify the atmosphere it breathes and ratify the cither it inhales.

In the British constitution there are the contending forces which at times seem so menacing but serve in reality only to cement and strengthen it. The real strength of a nation does not lie in mere smooth work, but in solidarity and compactness when the national interests demand them, and in sinking all personal differences as soon as the trumpet-call of duty is sounded to rally round a common cause. It would be most foolish to persist in prejudices in the name of principles and to lose sight of the real issue involved in a case. Nothing is more common in a game than for the players to quarrel over a false move and to take no notice of an impending checkmate. I do not endorse the opinion that a subject race has no politics, but I do maintain that the principles of a subject people must be somewhat elastic to suit the exigencies of their situation, and when a common cause demands unity of action a practical people cannot afford to quarrel over means but must be prepared to make sacrifices on both sides for the common end which must be placed above every other consideration. In the sphere of organised activities for the benefit of a corporate body, there is nothing more disastrous than want of mutual respect, trust and confidence among its members. Where the end is the same the diverse means and methods to attain that end should not betray either parties or individuals into a course of action which defeats that end.

A principle divorced from practice is apt to degenerate into a morbid sentiment and for all practical purposes even

the noblest of sentiments must at times bend itself to the stern necessities of circumstances and be regulated by a spirit of mutual confidence, toleration, forbearance and even sacrifice. The misfortune is that in the heat of a controversy we often lose sight of the end, and, missing the real issue, substitute the means for the end. A shade of difference in opinion, viewed in an atmosphere of prejudice and passion, is often magnified into a wide divergence of principle, and the most trusted of comrades easily find themselves ranged on opposite sides; while misunderstanding widens the breach, recriminations embitter the mind and misrepresentations serve to fan the fire into a flame. It was thus that we separated in 1907 and having grown wiser by our experience, we have, I presume, learnt to know each other better. Let us now no longer disparage the old nor despite the young. If youthful zeal and enthusiasm are invaluable assets, the judgment and experience as also the caution and sobriety of the old are no less useful indispensable.

It is no doubt the brave soldier that fights and wins the battle, but even a Narayani Sena of old, the invincibles in the Mahabharata, would be scattered to the winds without a veteran general to command them from behind. Remember it is the "Old Congressmen" who have built this organisation, given a shape and form to it, worked out its details and inspired the people with the very ideal which is swaying their minds and surging in their thoughts from one end of the country to the other. Believing, as I do, in the evolution of a national life in perpetual succession, I have no difficulty in admitting that there is a limit also to caution, wisdom and sobriety beyond which they cannot be exercised without their forfeiting the characteristics of these virtues and without their degenerating into pusillanimity and moral turpitude. There is as much danger in rashness as in imbecility and the one may serve as a cloak for inaction as the other may contribute to wreck the most useful institutions. It should be fairly acknowledged that if the "Old Congressmen" have so far failed to run faster than they have done, they have at least done one thing, in that have walked steadily and never

stumbled.

Men run before they learn to walk and if walking is a slower process running is not certainly a surer method to avoid a fall. It is surely not wisdom to call our elders fools, for there are those coming after us who, following our precedent, may return the compliment with accumulated interest. Let us, therefore, give up all cants and like practical men firmly and resolutely, yet soberly and discreetly look at the situation in the face, and with heart within and God overhead loyally follow the leaders who, if they have not won the battle, yet have neither fallen back nor betrayed their trust. I most cordially welcome Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mr. Motilal Ghose and other brave comrades who separated from us at Surat and have been happily restored to us at Lucknow. I rejoice to find that they are after all "of us" and "with us" and let us hope never to part again.

Presidential Pronouncement

Gentlemen, you naturally expect every year your President to make a clear and emphatic pronouncement, but you cannot expect your presidents—no, not even the tallest among them —to work miracles for you in a three days session. The ideal of the Congress has long been well defined and no new ideas are needed either to amplify or illustrate it, nor are fresh ideas as abundant as blackberries so that whoever passes by may pick up any number of them. The country has a number of grievances and the Congress had made certain demands to remove them. It has also decided that it shall use none but constitutional methods for the fulfilment of its demands. Your presidents can only perform the function of the air-man by taking a survey of the hostile positions, making the points of relative strength and weakness and signalling the lines of attack; but, after all, you are the gunners who have to fix your batteries, take your aim and actively work at the machines. Your President's echo of the prevailing sentiments of the country. Lord Morley complained that he could not give us the moon, but we were never so moon-struck as to ask for the moon and his Lordship need have no fears that

he has given us something more substantial than mere moonshine. Gentlemen, it will be my most earnest endeavour to throw some little light on some of the phases of the present situation, and if I cannot present to you even the faint light of the Aurora borealis, I shall certainly not presume to allure you by raising to your minds' eye the treacherously dancing flashes of the will-o-the wisp. Gentlemen, if you have this time gone a little out of your way in choosing your president, that president may be permitted to go a little out of the way of all past precedents in addressing you on the present occasion. I propose to confine myself mainly to one question which is the all absorbing topic of the day—the question of Self-Government for India. It is an all-embracing problem to the solution of which all other subsidiary questions are mere corollaries. If this one problem could be solved, the other problems would solve themselves. But before we proceed to discuss this question, we must have a clear idea of the form of Government under which we are placed, the defects of that form of Government, the disabilities which we suffer therefrom, the system of Government that we want as a substitute for it and our capacity to receive such a substitute.

The Form of Government We Live in: Despotism

It is now a matter of history that when a company of merchants introduced British rule in India in the middle of the 18th century, it was an absolutely despotic form of Government that was established in the country. Having regard to the unsettled state of the country and the internal dissensions and disputes not only among the different communities, but also among the people of the same community, any other form of Government would perhaps have been impossible at that time. A despotic form of Government is not necessarily synonymous with a bad government, but a beneficent despotism is of the exception and not of the rule. It is not every age or very country that can produce a Rama or a Harun-ul-Rashid, a Charlemagne or an Akbar. The Government of the East India Company over which the British Parliament exercised

little or no control, and the so-called Board of Control, very little supervision except for their own interest, was marked by nepotism and at its later stage by corruption. In spite of repeated warnings of Parliament, education was neglected, justice was perfunctorily administered and the strong were permitted with immunity to oppress the weak. The Company which had developed small factories into vast territories naturally regarded their unprecedented acquisition as a commercial enterprise and considered the sovereign administration of the county as of lesser importance than the development of their trade and the increase of their profits. They viewed their own interests more than the interest of the people. It is a wonder that such a system of Government could have lasted so long and surely it lasted long enough to meet with a violent end.

Benevolent Despotism

After a hundred years of misrule it was at last overthrown by a military rising which transferred the Government of the country from the Company to the Crown. From this time a system of Government was established in the county which gave altogether a new complexion the administration. This Government was designated a "benevolent despotism"—an expression which though not exactly a contradiction in terms, was sufficient to indicate that the form of Government was still essentially a despotism, though tempered by generous and benevolent considerations. It was this Government which actuated by its benevolent intentions introduced, by slow degrees, various reforms and changes which gradually broadened and liberalised the administration and widened the views and deepened the loyalty of the people. It fostered liberal education, established justice, created public confidence in the integrity of the administration and restored peace and order throughout the country. In its gradual development it introduced, though in a limited form, self-government in the local concerns of the people, admitted the children of the soil to a limited extent into the administration of the country and reformed the Councils by introducing an appreciable element

of representation in them. It has annihilated time and space by the construction of railways and the establishment of telegraphic communication throughout the country. It has established a form of administration which in its integrity and purity can well vie with any other civilised country in the world, while the security of life and property which it conferred was until recently a boon of which any people may justly be proud. All this a "benevolent despotism" has accomplished.

Bureaucracy

But here it stopped and after having exhausted all the resources which a personal benevolence could supply, it has slowly and imperceptibly yielded to the infirmities of its nature, and by a process of natural evolution has resolved itself into a system of barren and sterilising bureaucracy. Despotism has done in this country what despotism has done elsewhere, and if it has failed to do more, it is because its nature could not have permitted it to do more. In the exercise of its beneficent influence it reached a stage and attained a height beyond which it was not possible for despotism to ascend. The bureaucracy which now rules the country is despotism condensed and crystallised. In it the Service is so firmly and indissolubly combined with the State that for all practical purposes the one may be said to be completely merged in the other—a combination which is infinitely more dangerous than the combination of the Judicial and the Executive functions of which we have heard so much. It is certainly not accountable to the people and the Service and the State being one and the same it is responsible only to itself. It is essentially conservative in its temperament and thoroughly unprogressive in its character. Its efficiency is indisputable, its honesty and integrity beyond all question; but it is bound hand and foot to form a precedent lacking in life and soul. It can contract, but it cannot expand. It holds all the threads of the administration within the hollow of its palm and can ill afford either to release or to relax any one of them. It is extremely jealous of its powers and intolerant of criticism. It

sincerely wishes to see the people happy and contented, only it cannot allow them to grow. It has its idea of beauty and its Chinese shoe to give effect to it, however painful to its subject the operation may be. Like Narcissus of old it is so much entranced with the loveliness of its own shadow that it has neither the leisure nor the inclination to contemplate beauty in others.

The New Spirit

But the people have completely outgrown this system and a new spirit has arisen in the country. Call it visionary, call it impatient idealism, call it intoxication if you choose, that spirit is the manifestation of a democratic force which is transforming the destinies of an old world to a new order of things. Under the pressure of this irresistible force, time-honoured kindoms and constitutions are crumbling to pieces and giving place to new ones, and hereditary monarchs of ancient and even celestial origin are quietly taking their exit, as on a stage, without shedding a tear or a drop of blood. Portugal, Turkey, Persia and China all have felt the breath of this force. It is agitating Egypt and is pulsating the life of India. In India it has fortunately been of normal growth. This new spirit may be impulsive, but it is perfectly genuine and intensely patriotic. If sympathetically treated it may be directed in a proper channel, but it would be unwise either to ignore or try to repress it. Old ideas are changing faster than one can realise, and it is no fault of the Indian people if they are unable to reconcile themselves to a patriarchal or a paternal form of Government

The present form of Government, whatever its claims for the maintenance of an orderly administration may be, is more or less an anachronism. Sir Henry Cotton, who recalls with just pride that for three generations his family has been associated with the bureaucratic service in India, said that "the Indian Civil Service, as at present constituted, is doomed." While still in service he formulated a scheme of reconstruction which the Indian Public Service Commission of 1887 considered as "visionary". Now that another Royal Commission has been

appointed to enquire into the Indian Public Services, Sir Henry Cotton has again returned to the charge. Writing in the *Contemporary Review* and commenting on the terms of reference to the Commission, which apparently assume the existing constitution as the permanent basis of Indian administration, Sir Henry Cotton says:

"But what is wanted now is no scheme for bolstering up decaying fabric of a service adopted only to obsolete conditions which have passed away and never can return."

In a despotic form of Government everything is done for the people and nothing by the people. Its greatest drawback is that it makes the people whom it governs impotent to help themselves. If may make a people perfectly happy but it cannot make them resourceful nor even contented, self-reliant and manly in their life and conduct. Such a people must always be a burden to the State, and the "White Man's Burden" of which we hear so much is the creation of this despotic form of Government, and those complain of India being a "nuisance for the Empire" ought to remember that it is the accumulated errors of this form of Government during the last hundred and fifty years and more. Even in a benevolent despotism there is but one patriot and that patriot is either the despot or the close bureaucracy in which the Government is vested. As in a patriarchal family, the subjects of a despotic Government are of a stunted growth and are all more or less like spoiled children incapable of either helping themselves or helping the Pater familia.

Bureaucracy Nearing its End

But to its credit it must be recorded that this benevolent despotism has done one thing—it has prepared its own coffin and has written on it its own epitaph with its own hand. Despotism wholly repugnant to the British instinct and entirely foreign to the British Constitution, and what it did, therefore, was to prepare a curious admixture of two incongruous substances, a bureaucratic constitution leavened with democratic ideas, which can never coalesce but can serve only to

neutralise each other. Paradoxical as it may seem and strange as it may sound, this despotism has throughout consciously or unconsciously and perhaps in fits of absent-mindedness worked up to its own subversion, and like the fabulous Phoenix, in anticipation of its allotted cycle of years, prepared its own nest of spies, set fire to it and flapped that fire into a flame with its own wings singing its melodious song to consume itself into ashes out of which to rise again in a glorious re-birth. From the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 down to Lord Morley's Reform of 1909, the British Parliament has not taken a single step which was not calculated finally to overthrow this despotic form of Government. The education given to the people, the system of local self-government introduced into the country and the elective principle recognised in the higher Councils of the Empire have all tended to undermine the old system of Government which it would be a vain attempt now either to rebuild or to repair.

A Chapter of Mistakes

The bureaucracy have, however, discovered the mistakes of their predecessors. But it is not as easy to rectify as to discover mistakes. We too may have discovered many a mistake of our grand-fathers. But what avails it to cry over split milk? It is more than vaguely suggested that it was a mistake to have opened the eyes of the Indian people. I fully admit that from the point of view of these critics it was a great mistake—the greatest indeed ever committed by a despotic Government, benevolent or otherwise. It was a great mistake to have issued the Education Despatch of 1854, and it was a great blunder to have confirmed that mistake by the establishment of Universities at Calcutta in 1857, at Bombay and Madras in 1858, at Lahore in 1882 and at Allahabad in 1887. It was a mistake to have granted liberty to the press and freedom of speech throughout the country: it was a mistake to have introduced local self-government in 1884, and it was a greater mistake to have reformed the Councils in 1903 and again in 1910. It is a chapter, nay a whole volume, of mistakes which have been committed by successive parliaments and administrations

which, I am afraid, it is too late either to amend or to rectify. It is the instinct of the British people and the spirit of the British constitution which led the British Parliament to this long series of mistakes. But there has always been a counteracting force in India, and for ought we know, but for these mistakes both India and England might have met with greater difficulties. In recent years there has always been a tendency to cry "halt" and every step forced upon the bureaucracy in the forward march by the irresistible current of events has been followed by a paroxysm of regret, and all that the Government has been able to do to retain its ancient character and at the same time to keep pace with the pressing demands of the ceaseless march of time has invariably presented the appearance of texture of the faithful Penelope unravelling by night what is woven by day. Vain attempts are these : The tide has set in and it will not roll back under any human command. You may, adjust and re-adjust your wind-mill occasionally, but you cannot turn back the course of the river. The best and only remedy therefore now is not to go back but to press forward, not to cling to an obsolete and worn out institution which is no longer suited to the present condition of the country, but firmly and cautiously adapt the constitution to the requirements of the time and adjust it to the growing demands of the people. Every declaration made by the Government, every report of commissions and committees having a bearing upon the present unrest and every legislative measure passed to cope with the disturbed state of the country bear testimony to the fact that there is a struggle going on between a benevolent despotism and an overgrown people who, with all their defects and short comings, are no longer satisfied with the present system. On the one hand, there is manifested in almost every direction a marked tendency in the people to break through the leading strings by which they have been held so long and assert their constitutional rights and privileges as citizens of the British Empire, and on the other hand there is an equally persistent attempt on the part of bureaucracy to maintain its prestige and authority.

A Conflict

It is a case of clear conflict between the forces of an old constitution and the new spirit, and as the inevitable result of such a conflict, a state of things has arisen for which neither may be wholly responsible, but from which both have equally to suffer, although the presumption in such a case is always in favour of the people according to all political philosophers.

"I am not one of those," says Burke, "who think that the people are never wrong. That have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in their countries and in this. But I do say that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people."

In quoting this dictum of Burke with approbation, Lord Morley, who has recently dealt more with India than any other living British statesman, adds:

Nay, experience perhaps justifies him in going further. When popular discontents are prevalent, something has generally been found amiss in the constitution or the administration.

And truly does Burke observe:

"The people have no interest in disorder. When they go wrong it is their error and not their crime."

Then the great political philosopher continues in the words of Sully in which his biographer passionately enjoins that "Both practical politicians and political students should bind about their necks, and write upon the tables of their hearts : The revolutions that come to pass in great states are not the result of chance, nor of popular caprice....As for the populace it is never from a passion that it rebels, but from impatience of suffering."

It is in the nature of a bureaucratic administration to have absolute confidence in its own judgment and little respect for the opinions of others. The British Government, as established

in India at the present day, has no doubt long ceased to be an absolute despotism nor can it be described as a popular Government. A cursory examination of its policies and its practices will disclose the nature of this conflict and the stage at which it has arrived due as much to the process of natural evolution as to the legitimate sequence of events to which that policy has so largely contributed. Gentlemen, be it understood that we are here to criticise Government and not to sing its praises. If, therefore, we have more to refer to its defects and shortcomings, it is not to be presumed that we are wholly insensible to its many good points or are unable to appreciate them. Not do I feel pressed to enter upon any vindication of our loyalty to the Throne as it is above all cavil or criticism.

Education

To take up the question of education first, as it is the foremost problem in the evolution of a nation. Ever since the Crown took up the reins of government, it was actuated by a broad and liberal policy of educating the people and elevating them in the scale of nations. Worried and wearied with the evasive policy of the East India Company, the Board of Control under the guidance of a far-sighted statesman, Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Lord Halifax, issued the memorable Despatch of 1854 which is now known as the great Charter of Education in India. In pursuance of this Despatch, a University was established in 1857 in the then capital of the Empire.

But the Mutiny having broken out almost simultaneously, a pretext was easily found to propose a change of policy. Sir Frederick Halliday, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, came to the rescue and in a letter to Lord Ellenbo·ough, who was then the President of the Board of Control, neatly disposed of the objections raised. Sir Fredrick wrote : "On the question of the connection between education and the rebellion, our wisdom, no less than our duty, is to persevere in what we have begun and not to turn our backs upon Behar or any other parts

of our territory, became there is difficulty or danger in the path of improvement. It is certain, however, that both the difficulty and the danger are exaggerated and look imposing only to those who keep at a distance from them and view them through the delusive mist of prejudice and misinformation. As to difficulty, the progress of Bengal, within the memory of living witnesses, is a proof of the aptitude of the people and of their plastic docility. And though it is not uncommon in these days to attribute the recent mutinies to our educational operations, and even to propose to draw back from them for fear of similar consequences in future, the error of this opinion is like that of a man who after unwisely and incautiously exposing a barrel of gunpowder to all kinds of dangerous influences and having by good luck, and in spite of bad management, long escaped without an accident, should at last when the fatal and inevitable explosion takes place, blame neither the gunpowder nor his own rashness and indiscretion, but rather lay the whole mischief of account of some one of the many little sparks flying about, and talk of limiting the use of fire and candle in future to prevent similar occurrences."

No more statesmanlike view of the situations, or a more crushing reply, could have been advanced, and the Government of Lord Canning made a firm stand against the historic cry of an alarmist crowd. I have purposely quoted this long extract, for it will be seen that the same cry has again been raised in recent years and has contributed not a little to the shaping of the present educational policy of the Government, with this difference that there is neither a Halliday nor a Canning to take a dispassionate perspective of the situation and boldly adhere to the noble policy of 1854. In 1858, two more Universities were established in Bombay and Madras, and in the following years another despatch was issued under the authority of the Crown re-affirming the great Despatch of 1854 and laying down in clear and emphatic terms that greater impetus should be given to education in the future than had been done in the past, that more colleges and schools should be established throughout the country, that more systematic and sustained efforts should be made for the education of the masses, and that an unstinted

measure of encouragement should be extended to private enterprise towards the furtherance of education by state-grants and scholarships. It has to be noticed that having regard to the aptitude of the people and to the extraordinary zeal and eagerness evinced by them for the spread of education, it was further laid down, that Government should be reluctant to open Government institutions whenever private institutions could be expected or encouraged to do the work. Under the inspiring influence of this noble policy a great impetus was given to the cause of education, and colleges and schools rapidly increased throughout the country. This policy continued in its uninterrupted course till 1882 when under the Government of Lord Ripon another Education Commission was appointed for the further development of the educational system. Lord Ripon, considering the inadequate number of Universities, conceived the idea of adding two more Universities, one of which he himself established at Lahore in 1882,and the other was established by his successor at Allahabad in 1887.

But here dropped the curtain over the educational progress of India. The growing colour of the people for increased rights and privileges and their incessant demand for participation in the administration of the country led a nervous bureaucracy to regard education in the same light as it was regarded in 1857. The people having their mind and ideas expanded by Western education were aspiring to Western institution. It was indeed the dawning of "the proudest day of England" which Macaulay in his prophetic vision had foreseen and anticipated nearly seventy years before. But unfortunately for India and England, with the advent of Lord Curzon, the educational policy of the Government underwent a marked transformation.

Lord Curzon came in 1899 with twelve problems in his pocket for the education of which he obtained unfortunately for himself as well as for India a further extension of his office during which the "brilliant Viceroy", in the name of efficiency, set back the hand of progress in almost every direction, education receiving his foremost attention. It was veritable Pandora's Box that he carried which let loose all the forces of unrest, dis-

locating the existing order of things, reversing past policies and filling the minds of the people with concern and anxiety, hope alone remaining. Here were sown the seeds of that discontent which a Milton might well have invoked his muse to sing and from which both the Government and the country have been reaping so abundantly. His educational policy of 1902 culminating in the Indian Universities Act of 1904 dealt a death-blow to the further expansion of education and by its stringent rules and regulations sapped all indigenous enterprise for its further development. It was argued that the previous policy had served to extend the surface at the sacrifice of death, and that a shearing process was necessary to check all superfluous growth. Pruning is undoubtedly good, but the use of the pruning knife on a growing plant before it has put forth abundant leaves and branches is an operation which is calculated more to destroy than to improve. These rules and regulations would have been unobjectionable if only equal care had been taken for the proper accommodation of the ever-increasing influx of boys pressing every year for admission into the existing institutions. Hundreds of young men are debarred from the colleges and thousands of boys are thrown out of schools and turned adrift aimless and unequipped into this world to fight out the battle of life. It is an undeniable fact that within the narrow scope of the present regulations some improvements have been effected and larger grants have in recent years been made for education; but it cannot be overlooked that nearly 40 per cent of these grants are absorbed in supervision and superintendence while general education as well as the lower educational services are being practically starved. Depth may be preferred to surface, but a "top heavy" construction is always unsafe to any structure with the deepest foundation which human ingenuity may devise. In a country which, with the exception of Russia, is larger than the continent of Europe, there are now no more than 150 Colleges of all sorts and a little over 1,300 High Schools and 1,27,000 Primary Schools for the education of the masses for a population over 255 millions, and yielding a percentage of barely 7 literate men out of this vast population. It may be noted here that two-thirds of these Colleges and three-fourths of the High Schools are private Institutions. This is the sum-total of educational

progress made under a benevolent despotism during a period of 160 years and imagination fails to pierce into the aim and distant future when even half the population of this vast continent shall be so far advanced as to be able to read and write their names.

That is how education stands in the country after more than one and a half century of British rule, and yet a modest Bill introduced by a Congressman for Elementary Education was thrown out with a few complementary platitudes. The people demand a general diffusion of elementary education for the mass as preferable to no education, while Government insists upon better education for a few rather than wide-spread light for the many. No one can reasonably object to the quality of education for the few being improved, but a belief has gained ground in the public mind, not without some show of reason, that Government has begun to view the educational problem with suspicion and distrust and to reverse the engine for a backward motion. There is, however, no room for doubt that under the plea for creating a "serene atmosphere of education" political considerations have been largely introduced in the department of Education. In driving out the wooden ship the iron nail has been thrust in. Teachers have turned into spies and not in few cases are Superintendents suspected of having assumed the role of C.I.D. Officers. The sanctity of the temples of learning has been violated and our boys and youngmen are brought up in the unhealthy atmosphere of what may be called insecure jails. This the people solely resent and here the first conflict has taken place between a sensitive subject race and an autocratic Government each believing the other to be in the wrong and neither trusting the other either for mutual understanding or for a rational settlement of the question.

The Patna University Bill, which empowers the Chancellor to deal with any matter connected with the University in any manner "that may seem to him to be fit and proper" after making an enquiry to be made in any manner that he may think fit, places university education in a large province entirely under the arbitrary authority of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bihar,

and it makes the spread of high education impossible by practically prohibiting the establishment of new colleges.

The Administration

The next point of conflict lies in the administration itself. It is a preposterous attempt to compel a child to listen when he is able to speak and force him to crawl on his knees when he is able to walk on his legs. It is no rebellion in the adult members of a family to exercise their discretion and judgment and even to interfere, to some extent, in the management of its affairs, and reasonable *Pater familia* ought cheerfully to accept a change which is calculated only to relieve and not to dethrone him. What is true of a family is also true of a paternal government. A government must always conform itself to its changing environments and adapt itself to the ideas and requirements of the community which it is called upon to govern. The highest claim of British rule in India is not founded upon its military strength but upon its moral grandeur. Security of life and property is no doubt one of the highest attributes of a settled government, but this attribute is more or less to be found among backward, uncivilised governments anxious for their own existence. A pure form of administration of justice is the bed-rock of a civilized Government and it is this administration of justice which more than anything else has laid broad and deep the foundations of British rule in India resting upon the affection and confidence of the people. Anything which tends to undermine that foundation is therefore fraught with danger to the superstructure. As men are born free they naturally value their life and liberty infinitely more than their property. For property is a man's accident, while liberty is his birth-right.

In every country, therefore, the administration of criminal justice which affects life and liberty is viewed with much greater interest than the administration of civil justice and that is why even in this country lawyers find the criminal branch of their profession more lucrative than the civil one. In fact the administration of criminal justice in any country is more a political question than a mere settlement of private disputes. The greatest defect in administration of criminal justice in this country

lies in the fusion and combination of the judicial and the executive functions—a system in which the prosecutor and the judge, the man who works up a charge and the man who sits in judgment over that charge are rolled into one. For thirty years the Congress has cried hoarse for the separation of this unholy combination, hundreds of cases from unimpeachable and unchallenged records have been cited from year to year to illustrate the baneful results of the system which is calculated more than anything else, to shake the confidence of the people in the integrity of the administration of justice. Cases have occurred—and they are not few and far between—where racial considerations have outweighed the demands of justice, and the life of an Indian has not received greater considerations than that of a carb or a tortoise. There are of course men who are strong enough to challenge and drive discontent underground, but no one has the power to see the underground and watch the secret progress which such discontent silently works in its subterranean course. One complete generation has passed away since the Indian National Congress first drew the attention of Government to the danger underlying this inequitable system. One Viceroy considered his duty discharged by calling the proposal of the Congress a "Counsel of perfection" two successive Secretaries of State vied with each other in their pious wish to inaugurate this reform; while at least one Indian administrator denounced the existing system as being unworth of "rational beings." But the system still continues and seems to possess a charmed life which defies both a natural and a violent death.

Sir Harvey Adamson was reported to have actually gone so far as to submit a scheme for the proposed reform in 1908 and all sorts of speculations have been afloat in recent years.

The Press Act and the Liberty of the Press

The next point of conflict between the bureaucracy and the people has reference to the Liberty of the Press. The Press is a Western institution so firmly ingrafted with Western education and incorporated with Western methods of administration that it is now impossible to retain the one and remove the other. In every civilised country the Press has played the double role of

the educator of the public and the interpreter to the Government. In India the Press, with all its defects and lapses, as well as its numerous difficulties and disabilities, has played an important part in the evolution of National Life, and its chequered history is no mean evidence of the firm hold it has over the public mind and the sustaining energies of a growing people. It is not necessary to pursue that history. Suffice is to say that since the repeal of Lord Lytton's Gagging Act of 1878 the Indian Press steadily grew into a power which with a little more sympathetic treatment might easily have been converted into a useful adjunct of the administration. Unfortunately, however the Anglo-Indian Press began to be jealous of its formidable rival and the bureaucracy grew nervous of its strength. An ugly development for which the Indian Press was no more responsible than for the collision which took place at this time between the Campertown and the Victoria in the Atlantic, furnished an excuse and afforded an opportunity for again muzzling the Press in a way unprecedented in the history of any civilised country where a public Press exists. The Press Act of 1910, conceived in a spirit of repression, has reduced the Indian Press from its position as an independent critic of the Government to that of an institution entirely dependent upon sufferance. Within this short peoriod of less than seven years there had been a regular carnival of Press prosecutions in which newspapers have been suppressed, printing presses confiscated and their securities forfeited to an extent which has bewildered the public and alarmed the journalists. According to a statement furnished by Sir Reginald Craddock in February last there were no less than six press prosecution and in no less than five cases securities of newspapers were enhanced and no less than two hundred and twenty newspapers, both English and vernacular, ceased publication since the outbreak of the war and up to that date. The liberty of the Indian Press is practically gone and the highest tribunals in the land have declared themselves powerless to protect it. When the Act was passed the extreme rigour of the measure was admitted, but an assurance was given that it would be administered with care and consideration. Whether that assurance has been honoured more in its breach that in its observance may be left to the judgment of the public. And last, not

least, an extraordinary woman, Irish by birth, English by marriage and Indian by adoption, has been caught in the meshes of this Act and the provisions of the Defence Act are set in operation to coerce and restrain her. One Government has, under cover of the latter, interdicted Mrs. Besant from profaning its sacred territories with the touch of her feet, while another Government, acting under the former, not content with forfeiting the security of an old press, has demanded an exhorbitant security for her paper which threatens it with extinction. Gentlemen, how fast doth contagnio spread! Before I could finish writing these pages another Government has issued orders prohibiting her at the eleventh hour not to attend a religious conference held within its territories. I should not be surprised if the British public were to doubt the accuracy of this statement. The lame excuse offered by the C.P. Government of its extraordinary action has, however, failed to satisfy the Indian public. Mrs. Besant is as yet free—I use the word subject to correction —to live in British India and to travel over British India, but not to cross the Vindhya Chains and touch the sacred soil of Bombay and the Central Provinces. Are Bombay and the Central Provinces outside British ? She is charged by the Madras Government with matter seditious printed at her press. The Madras High Court has distinctly found that there was nothing seditious in her writing. Two High Courts have concurrently held that there may be illegal forfeitures under this Act and yet they were powerless to grant any relief. The appellate powers of the High Courts under the Act are a delusion and a snare. Yet there seems to be no disposition on the part of the Government either to withdraw or to modify this retrograde measure, although where a necessity for the bureaucracy arises a Bill may be passed at one sitting of the Council and a Validating Act rushed through to legalise its illegal proceedings. So much for the Law member's assurances and promises upon the strength of which the Indian members of the Council were led to vote for this dangerous enactment in their desire to help the Government at a critical moment. We may not see eye to eye with Mrs. Besant in many matters, but our hearts go forth to her in her trials and tribulations which not only affect her personal interests but are also a standing menace to the liberties of the Indian

subjects of His Majesty. What is Mrs. Besant's offence ? Is it that she loves India as she loves her own native land ? What is her offence ? Is it that her womanly instinct has led her to raise her manly voice in defence of the rights and liberties of a subject race, whose present condition, as contrasted with its ancient civilisation and departed glories, has found a place in her sympathies and got a hold upon her imagination, to which many people of her race are either blind or impervious ? The days of chivalry are gone and even womanhood is no protection against bureaucratic insensibilities. If she is seditious, why not try her for sedition in an open court where, if convicted, she will cease to be idolised as a martyr ? I hope the matter will not rest here, but will be carried beyond the seas and heard in a free country and by a free people before whose tribunal even an heir-apparent to the Throne bows as low as the humblest subject of the realm to receive his judgment.

The shrieks of a dying press, which have been so far drowned in the tumults of a devastating war, will not then go altogether unheeded. Laws may be enacted here to stifle the voice of public opinion, but a great nation nurtured on the lap of freedom cannot long tolerate a method of administration which is so entirely repugnant to its instinct and tradition. It only requires to be correctly informed and duly impressed. It may be difficult to move it; but one in motion even the omnipotent power of the bureaucracy will not avail to arrest its onward march towards the establishment of freedom in this land.

The sufferings of Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak are well-known to the public. I am here neither to defend nor to denounce him. The latest proceedings which were instituted against him at Poona have, however, raised a grave issue which cannot be passed over. I cannot persuade myself to believe that in initiating these proceedings the authorities were actuated by any unworthy motive. But I deeply regret that Government was ill-advised in taking them at a time and under circumstances where its action was liable to be misconstrued. In disposing of this case, Sir Stanley Bachelor has enunciated a law, the

correctness of which seems to be open to grave doubts. He says that the condemnation of the Civil Service *en bloc* is tantamount to a condemnation of authority, as the service is an agent of that authority. Carried to its legitimate consequences, this dictum would be a bar to any criticism against any of the services. The Criminal Intelligence Department is at present in closer touch with the Government than even the Civil Service and may be regarded, as such, a more accreditated agent of the Government. And what is there to present the principle here enunciated from being applied to that department, or to the Police in general, and for the matter of that to the village *chowkidars* ? The law of Agency cannot apply to the relation between the Crown and its servants. Some years back, this question was pointedly raised when Sir George Campbell who was not inaptly called the Tiberius of the Indian Civil Service charged the Hindu Patriot with "ill-will towards Government" for its strong criticism of the Civil Service. The late Kristodas Pal most forcibly and faithfully drew this distinction between the state and the service. He said : "The words ill-will to Government are not however explicit. Is the word Government in the phrase intended to mean the Queen's government for the Local Administration ? the ruling power or the executive agency ? the Sovereign mistress of the Empire, or her officers in the country ? None is better aware than His Honour that the Supreme Power and the administrative authority are quite distinct ; and nowhere is this distinction made so broadly and clearly as in England. When for instance, Mr. Disraeli denounced the other day the present Government of Her Majesty as 'blundering and plundering' it would be a gross perversion of language to interpret this imputation into 'ill-will to Government,' that is, the Sovereign authority, the Queen herself. It would be impertinent in me to remark that if criticisms of public men and measures be construed into 'ill-will to Government' there is not a single journal in this country, with the slighest pretence to independence, which would not be open to this charge." In our own times, the fulminations of Sir Edward Carson inciting the Ulstermen to stand against the established government in England are still fresh in the minds of the public and yet this leader of the Orangemen was not considered

unworthy of receiving an invitation to a conference from the King himself. In India by a strange irony of fate even the long-established principles of law easily yield to much wider interpretation and judges are not wanting who hold that a sharp criticism of even a member of the ruling race is equivalent to a contempt of the Government itself.

Gentlemen, the ill-starred definition of disaffection has died out but here arises another alarming dictum which should engage your serious attention.

The Arms Act

The Indian Arms Act is another source of irritation which has estranged the feeling between the people and the governing class. Apart from the invidious and irritating character of this measures it has emasculated a whole nation, degraded them not only in their own estimation, but also in the estimation of other races not in any way superior to them, and reduced them to a condition of absolute helplessness. It has stunted the growth of a people, dwarfed its mental stature and debased its moral character, by depriving it of its sense of national self-respect. It has reduced it to the position of political *pariahs* smarting under disgrace and without any sense of responsibility. Maharajah Jabbar Jung Bahadur may not carry a single revolver for his own protection but his driver Jones may have any number of them for his pastime, for purpose of illicit sale, and for shooting not only peasants but also sometime poor Indian peasant whom he may easily mistake for a pig. But all bad measures are like the devil's engine which must at one time or other recoil back on him who uses it, and this is what has happend. It is as easy to govern a country by disarming its entire population as to convert a whole country into a jail. Anarchism has reared its head and there has been a recrudescence of lawlessness in some part of the country. Dastardly assassinations are committed in crowded cities in broad daylight and daring robberies are committed like candle-light performances in an Opera House.

The reply to all this, which has so far been vouchsafed, is

that the people are cowards and are unable to help themselves. But whose fault is it if the people are cowards and unable to help themselves ? Is it of the people who have been made cowards and helpless, or of those who have made them so ? It is quite refreshing to hear of people seriously advised to arm themeslves with brickbats and bamboo lathies to face an armed band of robbers and assassins equipped with Martini rifles and Mauser revolvers. Example is said to be better than precept, and those who indulge in ludicrous advice of this sort would do infinitely better to set an example themselves before they can persuade others to follow them. Even Hercules did not venture to challenge the Larnian Hydra without his club. The Arms Act has been practically reduced to address letter, for the lawless few are never in want of any firearms, but it is the law-abiding many that have been deprived of the use of them. A great empire and a little mind are said to go ill together. And where the spirit of confidence is wanting in an administration, its means and measures must be weak and self-contradictory and thus ultimately defeat its own end.

The Defence of India Act and Internments

And now, where other repressive measures have failed to restore peace and order in the country, a deadlier instrument has been put into requisition. A desperate situation no doubt calls for a drastic remedy and no one has a right to complain if Government is obliged to take an extreme precautionary measure in view of a conflagration which is now devastating all the five continents of the world. The Defence of India Act like the Defence of the Realm Act in England was no doubt necessitated by the exigencies of situation, but the purposes to which it is being used appear to be entirely foreign to the spirit and outside the scope of this extraordinary enactment, while the safeguards provided in the home-measure have been wholly dispensed with in its operation in this country. Again when the Act was passed an assurance was not wanting that it would be administered with great care and consideration. It was undoubtedly an emergency Act necessitated by the extraordinary circumstances which suspended the ordinary course

of law and vested the administration of justice in certain cases entirely in the executive Government of the country.

Gentlemen, the sting of every repressive measure is in its tail. There is a small clause in these enactments which passes without any debate in the legislative council authorising the executive Government to frame rules to give effect to the operation of such a measure. These rules, hatched in secret beyond the key of the established legislature and beyond the scope of public criticism, suddenly emanate full panoplied like Minerva springing out of Jupiter's head. These rules sometimes thrice the size and volume of the Act itself, govern the proceedings. In the case of the Defence of India Act, Section 2 provides this brief little authority which is now deciding the fate not only of so many young men but also of some of the public men in the country without a trial and without a hearing. The Act provides the slender safeguards of special tribunal final in its decision, but the rules have taken away even this safeguard in cases of internments and interdictions provided by clause (f) of section 2 of the enactment. A man may invoke the aid of the tribunal if he violates the rules but not when rules are enforced against him.

It may be no injustice done to characterise it as "Jedburgh Justice." The Defence of India Act is essentially a war-measure and although the expression "Safety of India" is introduced in its preamble it clearly indicates such safety as may be jeopardised only by the war-conditions with the enemy. It never could have been intended to cover public peace and tranquillity in the internal administration of the country for which ample provisions already exist in the adjective law of the land. Is there any evidence that the assassinations, dastardly as they are perpetrated mostly against Indian police officers, and some of which took place even before the Serajevo-outrage, have any connection with German intrigue, or is there anything to show that the party plundered in course of armed brigandage find their way or are even interned to find their way to the German Exchequer ? The assassinations of Earl Mayo and Chief Justice Norman, even the more recent murders of Rand and Ayerst,

and of Judge Jackson did not necessitate such a measure. It is clear, therefore, that the Defenceof India Act was never intended for internal administration at home, but only to govern external relations with the enemy countries abroad. But how sad it is to contemplate that it has been so widely diverted from its legitimate scope, and how are its provisions being applied in India? A secret murder perpetrated and burglary committed, and, in fact, every piece of a diabolical crime whether committed before or after the outbreak of hostilities, where the criminals cannot be detected and punished under the ordinary law of the land, are made the occasion for the use of this lawless law. Where an accused person is tried and acquitted by a court of justice he is good for a capture under the provisions of this Act. In one province alone nearly 600 young men have already been arrested, a considerable number of whom have already been domiciled in different parts of the country, while others are passing through their purgatory in the gloomy cells of Dallanda House preparatory to the receipt of their judgment. These proceedings are generally believed to be based upon the informations supplied by the spies whose occupation would be gone if their activities could not be maintained. We are told that the final judgment in these cases is vested in an officer who is "fit to be a High Court Judge." Yes, but the misfortune is that after all he is not a High Court Judge and that makes a world-wide difference. He does not breathe the atmosphere of a High Court, he is not swayed by the considerations of a High Court and he has not the means and materials of a High Court Judge, and it is no consolation to the people to learn that he is fit to be a High Court Judge. Then it would be something if this would be High Court Judge were allowed to dispose of these cases in the presence of the accused persons sitting even in camera. Even Rogers Casement charged with the blackest of crimes—the charge of high treason and conspiracy with the enemy of the King—had an open trial and a right of appeal. Are the detenues under the Defence of India Act guilty of more heinous crimes and misdemeanour? Even the certificate of a District Officer or of a Divisional Commissioner affords no protection against the report of spies. Anarchism is the Common enemy of mankind throughout the world. In e ery country and

every age civilised humanity has refused to recognise the brotherhood of the secret murderer and the dastardly assassin, and none but an anarchist need defend or support an anarchist. But a general crusade against a community in the name of anarchism is justified neither by reason, or logic, nor considerations of expediency. The rats are a recognised nuisance and for aught we known they may be also responsible for the plague and the pestilence. But if the rats are so sly as to elude or grasp and so subtle as not to come into the cage laid for them, no man in his senses and even under the greatest provocation should so far forget himself as to be induced to set fire to the house to get rid of these pests.

The Colour Bar

An almost insurmountable colour bar has been drawn up that runs through almost every department of the state which the children of the soil are forbidden to cross. The entire administration is divided into two compartments, one Imperial and the other Provincial. The boxes are all reserved and it is only the pit which is open to the people. In the Civil Service, in the Educational Service and in the Medical Service everywhere there is a sharp racial distinction irrespective of qualification and competency, which is as arbitrary as it is galling to the feelings and sentiments of the people. Competition, the most effective test of merit, has been superseded by nomination, and offices are largely distributed as mere patronage. The services are visibly deteriorating and strange as it may sound a Government which finds in the caste system of the people such a serious obstacle to their national advancement is sedulously building up an official caste almost as rigid and as exclusive as the Brahmanical hierarchy ever was. The officials have generally lost all touch with the people and three is now no greater passport to public employment than a hereditary claim which grows by what it feeds on. Fusion is the first principle of national growth, but disintegration is the policy of a bureaucracy to counteract that growth.

Immigration

Gentlemen, it is with a sense of pain, shame and humiliation

that I approach the question of immigration and indentured labour. India, the granary of the world, is unable to maintain her surplus population and thousands of her children, like her raw materials, are sent away to other countries for employment for the bare necessaries of life. The immigrants, so absolutely necessary for the development of the resources of South Africa, Australia and Canada, are treated there as helots and India is regarded today throughout the civilised world as the recruiting ground for *coolies* necessary for manual labour. I do not hesitate to denounce this degrading system as the last relic of slavery within the British Empire. The question is said to be not free from difficulties, but all these difficulties are due more than in the relation of Great Britain in regard to her self-government colonies than to the condition of India herself. Mr. M.K. Gandhi's heroic struggles in South Africa are fresh in the minds of our people and Lord Hardinge's effort to ameliorate the condition of the Indian settlers in the British Colonies evoked more sharp criticism than active sympathy in the United Kingdom. It is galling that peoples of yesterday who have scarcely a tradition of their own should be permitted to treat as slave people whose civilisation goes back to the morning of this world. Lord Gladstone in opening the Parliament of the South African Union only a few years ago reminded them of this fact and bore striking testimony to the worth of the Indian people. He said, "I have made special duty of the Indian history and have later visited India. I wish more South Africans could go there and by so doing rise to the highest appreciation of what the Indians were. They would then think less of India as a country which sends its coolies to the South African Coast. In fact India has developed perhaps far above the line attained by some parts of the British Empire in its civilisation and efforts to rise to a higher life." But what avails such testimony ?

Slaves at home can never be treated as free men abroad.

I use the word in the sense in which Mill has used it. "They are slaves", says Mill "who cannot help themselves." Complete reciprocity and retaliation are the only remedies for this degrading humiliation inflicted upon our people, and Home Rule alone can furnish the necessary prescription. So long as

the Canadians, the South Africans and the Australians are free to settle in India and also to find their way to the public service of the country, no tinkering measure, no controlling wages will solve the question.

The Swadeshi Movement and Industrial Development

Gentlemen, if the ill-fated Swadeshi Movement had been directed in its proper channel and not checked as an unhealthy growth, the question of the industrial development of India, which has now attracted the anxious attention of Government, might have admitted of a much easier solution.

The war has disclosed that in 1905 the Indian Nationalists, declared hostilities not against Great Britain, but against Germany and Austria, and that if the Auhorities in India had taken a more dispassionate and farsighted view of the situation, German and Austrian trade in India would have died ten years ago and without a naval blockade.

The fault, however, did not lie wholly with the Government, but the people had also to bear a share of the responsibility. Nowever that may be the question of rebuilding Indian industries out of their ashes is not free from serious difficulties, and unless Government is prepared honestly and resolutely to come forward to make atonement for its past sins of commission and omission, it may never be solved. Much is said about the phenomenal progress of Japan, and Sir Thomas Holland has recently thrown a flood of light upon her industrial development. But what is the secret of her success ? Amidst all the disquisitions and speculations which have gathered round the question there looms large one fact which can neither be overlooked nor disputed. Japan possesses a National Government which India does not. In Japan there is no clashing of interest between the people and the State, but in India although the interests of the Government may not collide with those of the people, its industrial policy is to a large extent controlled by considerations independent of the interest of India. Gentlemen, I pause here for a moment to thank the Government of the United Provinces which is the only administration that has as

yet taken any practical interest in the development of some of our industries.

If, however, for any reason the Government finds itself handicapped in the way of building up new industries on its own account, as 'in Japan, it can at any rate do much to help and encourage such industries. It can add a portfolio of industries to the members in charge of Commerce and carry on an investigation through experts as to which industry is best suited to what part of the country, regard being had to the production and raw materials facilities of communication and labour. Then as Indian capital starts any business on a sound and substantial basis, the Government may come forward to purchase portion of its share in order to secure both an effective control over it and an abiding interest in its success. And, above all, it may guarantee to such a concern a certain rate of profit or dividend for a period sufficient to enable it to stand on its own legs. while it may render no inconsiderable help by becoming its customer for its own purposes. It may also remove all unjustifiable excise duties and grant railway concessions. If the Government will do all this, it will discharge its functions as a benevolent state and remove the shyness of Indian capital in an unequal competition with its formidable foreign rivals. If this cannot be done, the Government will be well-advised not to waste its money over academic conferences and commissions to serve no other purpose than that of raising false hopes and aggravating public discontent.

In this connection I would make a passing reference to an important question in regard to which the opinions of public bodies and associations are being sought, but which, as far as I can see, has not excited much public interest, I mean the proposal to transfer the railways to private companies. It is a great economic question and ought not to be as lightly treated as it appears to have been done in certain unexpected quarters. The Railways are one of the most important state concerns whose earnings constitute by no means an inconsiderable portion of the state revenues.

The great highways of trade and commerce are public do-

main and belong to the State. To transfer them to any private individual or individuals or to allow them to manage them may be an act amounting to a serious infringement of public rights and an abdication of a State function. We are looking forward to a time when the Government will become national if not in its personnel at least in its aims and purposes and the railways owned by the State and controlled by the State} will then be conducted upon national lines and will be the hand-maid of the national industries by offering facilities for their growth and development. The time has come for the definite acceptance of this policy.

A National Militia

Gentlemen, no people can be either self-respecting or respected by others unless they are able to defend themselves. A people always dependent upon Government for the safety of their life and property must be an intolerable burden on the state and a source of weakness to it. A vast Empire like British India, without a National army protected by a nominal force of 70 thousand European soldiers and 140 thousand Indian troops may be a wonderful feat; but it is a most dangerous experiment. If the Indians were trained but as volunteers only five years ago, although the Congress has been demanding the privilege for the last twenty-five years, the humiliating spectacle of Lord Kitchener, Lloyd George and Lord Derby alternately coaxing and threatening the British people for raising an army of two millions might easily have been avoided and at all event a general conscription, so distasteful to British tradition, might not have today become such an imperative necessity. India, with her teeming millions, properly trained and equipped, standing behind England, can present an invincible front against any power in the world. The question is not one of men and materials, but of trust and confidence. But has not India given sufficient proof of her fidelity and devotion to the British connection ? If not, England must stand self-condemned before the eyes of the civilised world.

Such is the situation. Bureaucracy has accomplished its work. It has established order and tranquillity. But it has out-

grown itself. Its continued existence is fraught with mischief and unable to cope with the rising forces of popular opinion and with the demands created with the new spirit, it has had recourse to a policy which has excited grave public discontent. What then is to be the remedy ? That remedy is what has been so effectively applied in other countries similarly circumstanced and the remedy which suggests itself to the Indian mind, as it occurred to John Stuart Mill and to Edmund Burke, lies in the grant of.

Representative Government

Call it home-rule, call it self-rule, call it swaraj, call it self-government, it is all one and the same thing—it is Representative Government. The idea is not a new one, nor is it the revelation of any evangelist. As far as I am aware, the idea dawned upon the people in 1882 when the agitation on the Ilbert Bill first revealed to the people the helplessness of their situation. A National League was then formed and a burning pamphlet called the Star in the East was issued which was written in a style and language which if employed at the present day would have surely stranded the writer in serious difficulties. Lord Ripon fully anticipated the demand when in his famous Resolution of January, 1882, he told the people that "local self-government must precede national self-government." Although the first Indian National Congress passed no resolution directly bearing on the question, the notification under which it was called into existence clearly stated that one of the objects of the future assembly was indirectly to form the germ of an Indian Parliament which, if properly conducted, will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institution.

And Mrs. Annie Besant in heir admirable book, "How India Wrought for Freedom", has pointedly referred to the utterance of Grand Old Man of India which clearly foreshadowed the coming demand of Indian people for self-government. Ever since then the idea worked and matured itself when in the brilliant sessions of the Congress in 1906, it found an emphatic and

unequivocal pronouncement from the very same patriarch of the Indian political world in his trumpet call for Swaraj which has since then stirred the Indian mind to its utmost depth to find the true remedy which it had so far sought in vain. A generation has passed away, but a generation has risen whose sole and wholehearted demand is nothing short of self-government as the sovereign remedy for the present unsatisfactory situation. A cry has, however, been raised that we are not yet fit for self-government. Procrastination is the proverbial thief of time. It is also the orthodox plea of a frame of mind which, unable to cope with an untenable position, only asks for an adjournment to seek for a compromise on the most favourable terms.

But before we proceed to discuss this question we must first divest ourselves of the dogmatism which prevails with equal force, though not with equal authority, on both sides, and try to understand the question in the light of the unanswerable logic of facts. Let us see what are the requisites of self-government and how far the Indian people possess these requisites to reasonably demand self-government.

Three Conditions of Mill

John Stuart Mill in his book on Representative Government lays down three conditions for self-government which are now universally accepted by all writers on political philosophy. These conditions are : 1st, that the people for whom the form of Government is intended should be willing to accept it, 2nd, that they must be willing and able to do what is necessary to keep it standing, and 3rd, that they must be willing and able to do what it requires of them to enable it to fulfil its purposes. To these three tests I will add a fourth, by way of a rider, directly to meet the argument of our critics, have the people given satisfactory evidence of their capacity for self-government ?

Education No Test

It will be noticed that Mill nowhere lays down education as a separate and independent test for self-government and

this is for a very good reason. Education no doubt sharpens and stimulates the other tests; but it cannot be the sole or even the main test for a National Government. The Hindus in the 13th century and the Musalmans of India in the 18th century were the masters of no inconsiderable share of unprofitable learning; but it neither developed their national solidarity, nor strengthened their national character, and both in their turn fell an easy prey to a superior force. The Mohammedan historian admits that India was conquered not by superior education, but by the superior Islamic national solidarity and strength. On the other hand the Slave Republic of Liberia was established by an uneducated mass of emigrants from America upon their liberation towards the beginning of the 19th century. Then take the case of Europe. There also education has not played a very important part in determining the form of government suited to each country. According to the latest statistics available, Norway and Sweden carry the largest percentage of educated population, it being 97, England has a percentage of 87, France 78, Germany 91, and Portugal 56.

If education had been the determining factor, Norway and Sweden would not have been practically an absolute Monarchy and France or Portugal a Republic, while Germany would have long ceased to be a military despotism where a subalten can with impunity punish judges and magistrates for the grave offence of not being deferential to his uniform and the theory of the Superman sways the minds of 80 millions of human beings of the highest culture and erudition in the world. What was the education of England during the reign of Charles I, and was not the Magna Charta wrested from a despotic king by a band of uneducated barons who could sign their names only by scrolls and marks ?

In 1821 there were nearly 18,500 schools with 6,50,000 scholars in Great Britain. In the year 1858 the number of schools rose to 122,000 and the scholars to over 3,000,000. We have it on the authority of the Education Commission of 1882 that prior to 1854 when the first Educational Despatch of Sir Charles Wood was issued, there were merely a million of stu-

dents in British India receiving elementary education in the various indigenous institutions. The statement of the member of Education 1914 shows that there are at present 127,000 schools with over 5,000,000 scholars receiving such education. It would thus appear that the number and the percentage of literates in Great Britains in the reign of George IV were not higher than those of India in the reign of His Gracious Majesty George V, and that the number, though not the percentage, of literates in India in 1914 does not compare very unfavourably with that of Great Britain in 1858. And yet what was the constitution of Great Britain in 1821 and what is the constitution of British India in 1916 ! Education, therefore, though it may help and promote self-government, is not an indispensable condition or a condition-precedent to self-government.

First Condition

The First condition needs not much elaboration, as the willingness of the people for self-government is not only admitted, but is said to be premature and somewhat extravagant. The press and the platform even in their present muzzled condition are ringing with the cry for self-government, and on every occasion whether in the heated Council Chambers or in the serene atmosphere of literary discussions there is an insistent demand for self-government as the only remedy for the present situation.

Second and Third Conditions

The second and the third conditions may be considered together. India, self-contained and contented, with its natural defences and internal resources presents a bulwark against all foreign aggression. Its danger is not from without but from within. During the last sixty years since the Crown has assumed the reins of government it must be admitted that there has not been even the ripple of a disturbance and the people, educated or uneducated, despite all their vexations and disappointments, their hardships, their grievances and the initiating measures which have so often provoked their patience, have throughout stood fast by the Crown. They have protested, but have no-

where resisted the measures of the Government. Since the outbreak of the war, India has been practically denuded of soldiers and it has been possible for Government to maintain peace and order throughout the vast country with only the help of the police as it exists in India. Those who recklessly cry "the wolf" ought to know that if the wolf had really been anywhere in the field, it would not have been possible long to indulge in this foolish trick. It ought to be fairly conceded that the credit of this remarkable achievement is evenly divided between the Government and the people, the confidence of the people in the Government and the trust of the Government in the people; and that any attempt on the part of either to appropriate it to itself the whole credit is an absurd pretension.

The spirit of co-operation and self-help infused into the minds of our people mainly by the inspiring breath of the Congress, and the numberless societies. Missions and associations which have sprung up throughout the country with philanthropic and other aims and objects are sufficiently indicative of the quickening of a national life, and the courage and endurance displayed by our young men in every public cause, are all unmistakable evidence of the readiness of the people to support the administration. In flood and famine, in fires and fairs and in other positions of dangers, difficulties and distress there are thousands of youngmen who eagerly rush forward and despite police surveillance to which they are subjected. The Hospital Ships furnished by Bombay and Madras, the Ambulance Corps and the Double Company provided by Bengal and the various war funds raised throughout the country are no mean evidence of the willingness and readiness of the people to co-operate with the administration. All these in my opinion, afford striking evidence of the devotion and the capacity for self-sacrifice which our countrymen are prepared to incur in the public interests and which constitute the most valuable qualification for self-rule. This shows that our people are willing and able to make the Government stand and are ready to make the necessary sacrifices for the establishment of National Government. Lapses no doubt there are, but do they not occur even among people invested with full measure of self-government ? A National Government would shift the burden as well as its odium

and unpopularity from the state to the people and would necessarily make them still more alive to their responsibilities. It is power which creates responsibility. Responsibility without power is a debt without security which cannot be enforced if left undischarged.

It was Goerge Yule who, twenty years ago, speaking at the first Congress held in the United Provinces, said that all political agitations have to pass through three stages—that of ridicule, opposition and concession. We have long passed the stage of ridicule and almost passed the second stage and we are now practically on the debatable ground between opposition and concession standing more on the firm soil of the latter than on the slippery ground of the former.

No Yet

There are, however, those who say "not yet." Not yet! Then 'when'? asks the Indian Nationalist. But here the Oracle is dump and Echo only answers 'when'! Edwin Bevan's parable of "the Patient and Steel-frame" is cited and the people are strictly enjoined to lie in peace and possess their souls in patience until their political *Nirvana* is accomplished. Similes and mataphors are not safe guides in practical life, for all fables are but fallacies clothed in equivocal language which captivates the imagination and deludes the reason. For even the patient in the "steel-frame" requires a gradual relaxation and occasional readjustment of his splints and bandages and, above all, a steady, substantial improvement in his dietary arrangements, as after all it is the food and nourishment and not the splints and bandages, that are calculated to give him strength and care him of his injuries. You cannot indefinitely keep him on milk and sago to help either the "knitting of the bones" or the "granulation of the flesh." Our critics, however, would enjoin "perfect, quiet and repose" without prescribing any kind of diet until the people shall have in their spirit of quiescence fully recovered themselves in their steel-frame. If any illustration were actually needed, one might fairly suggest that the case of either the swimmer or the rider would probably furnish

a more apposite object lesson. You cannot except the one to be expert jockey without training him on the back of a horse, as you cannot except the other to be an expert swimmer without allowing him to go into water. There must be repeated falls and dockings before any efficiency can be attained by either. Admitting for argument's sake—and there can be no prejudice in such an admission—that the Indians are not yet as fit for self-government as the Europeans are, does it follow that they must only patiently contemplate in their steel-frame without a stir till the day of their release ?

If that be so, the day of their redemption will, in all probability, maintain its ever receding distance and the vision of the patient never realised.

There is a school for the lawyer, the physician, the educationist and the engineer where he can obtain his passport and begin his profession; but is there any school or college where an aspirant can be admitted to his degree for self-government ? It is through self-government that the art of self-government can be either taught or acquired. One must be drilled in the art of administration before he can acquire the steady use of his faculties in the work of practical administration. In the words of Mr. Gladstone, it is the institution of self-government which constitutes the best training ground for self-government.

It is through failure that success can be achieved in practical politics. Such failure was fully anticipated by Lord Ripon in his famous Resolution of 1882, and it is through such failures that the British people have obtained the constitution of which they are so justly proud. In the reigns of James I, Charles I and his successors, what was the British constitution and the status of the British people when Parliament could be summoned or dismissed at the pleasure of despotic sovereign and titles and offices were freely brought and sold without any regard to public interest ? The mass of the people were steeped in ignorance, while the highest officers in the State were not sometimes free from intrigue and corruption. Yet the British people fought

for their rights and liberties and obtained them in the midst of these favourable conditions. If they had ever allowed themselves to be kept in a steel-frame until "nature resumed her active process, where would have been the splendid fabric of British constitutional freedom today ? Nature never helps those who do not help themselves.

Are Indians Fit for Self-Government

Now let us turn to a discussion of the rider which was started at the beginning of the question. Gentlemen, our critics have already begun sorting our politicians. I do not pretend to be a politician; but even if I were one, I would far rather go with the "politicians of the better sort" than agree to rise one degree higher, or one degree lower as you may choose to call it, in the estimation of our critics, while as to the superlative degree I would ungrudgingly have it reserved for those who have so far forgotten the traditions of their own race as to completely divest themselves of the instincts of a free and liberty loving people to which they ethnologically belong. The question to be answered is. Have the Indian people given fair proof of their capacity for self-government ? I do not like to indulge in theories. Let facts answer.

In the Native States

India possesses an area of 1,800,000 square miles with a population of 316 millions, of which over 700,000 square miles of more than one-third of this area, with a population of over 70 millions or close upon one fourth, belong to the independent Native States. Now these States are entirely managed by Indian administrators, and it has to be admitted that some of them are marching ahead of British India in certain directions, particularly in respect of education, judicial reforms and industrial development which and the most sacred functions of a constitutional government. It must be borne in mind that not a few of these distinguished administrators who achieved such brilliant results in the administration of these states are sometimes drawn from His Majesty's subjects in British India. Man like Sir Salar Jung, Sir Kinkar Rao, Sir T. Madhav Rao, Mr. Dadabhai Nao-

roji, Rao Bahadur Sardar Sansar Chandra Sen, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt, Sir Sashiah Shastri, Mr. Ranga Charlu, Mr. Gouri Shankar Ojha, Mr. Seshadri Aiyer, Mr. B.L. Gupta, Mr. Nilambar Mukherjee and Mr. A.R. Banerjee who have governed various Native States with such consummate ability and conspicuous success, have indisputably vindicated the capacity of their countrymen for the highest administrative offices. They have shown that if commanded by their Sovereign, they were fit to hold any portfolio in the Government of India. If these distinguished administrators had their lot cast solely in British India, many of them would have in all probability ended their careers as deputy-magistrates, a few as district officers and fewer still as officiating commissioners of divisions.

In the Various Services

Then, have not Indians in British India given practical proof of their administrative capacity to qualify themselves for self-government ? Have they not in the charge of districts both as judicial and executive officers, and have they not in charge of division or of a board of revenue, or in the intricate department of audit and account given sufficient evidence of their ability and capacity for efficient administration ? Have they not been tried in the humbler stages of self-government as well as in the higher legislative assemblies ? They have been tried in the inner circles of the Provincial as well as the Imperial administration and they have been also tried at the real seat of authority in Whitehall. True, Sir S.P. Sinha might never have aspired to the chair occupied by Maine and Macaulay; but has England sent any more Maines and Macaulays to fill that chair ? Or was Sir S.P. Sinha or Sir Syed Ali Imam an altogether unworthy successor of Sir James Stephen or of Sir C.P. Ilbert ? In the great department of administration of justice they have been tried in the highest tribunals of the land where they have acted and are acting as Chief Justices with as much credit and distinction as any brought out from England, while in the domain of Education they have as Vice-Chancellors managed important universities in a way which has extorted the admiration, if not the envy, of the most captious critics. They

have also managed with remarkable success the affairs of one of the foremost, if not the foremost, corporations in the country. All these they have done, and if they have not done more, it is their misfortune and not thier fault.

Other Qualifications

Self-control, strength of mind and fidelity are among the highest virtues of an administrator, and judged by these tests, have not Indians acquitted themselves in a manner worthy of the best traditions of any service in the world ? Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha's resignation of his seat in the Executive Council is still a mystery to the public. But whatever may be its solution, it is an open secret that at a critical time he withdrew the resignation that he had tendered and stood loyally by the Government. Has anybody ever heard the faintest wisher of this incident from the lips of Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha ? Then take another case. The Partition of Bengal had stirred the people of Bengal to a state of feverish excitement unprecedented in their history. Petitions and protests to Viceroys and Ministers were of no avail and after seven years of persistent agitation the people were awaiting in breathless suspense the decision of His Majesty. A despatch from the Governor-General in Council recommended a modification of the partition in August 1911 and Sir Syed Ali Imam was one of the signatories to this eventful document. Yet, on the 12th December, the Royal Proclamation came as a complete surprise both upon the local governments as well as upon the people. The partition was said to have been effected in the interest of the Mohammedans. But did Sir Syed Ali Imam either in his quivering lips or tell-tale eyes betrary in the slightest degree the secret deed of the prison house within this anxious period of five months.

THE OBJECTIONS

An Inarticulate Mass and the Educated Community a Bug Bear

The most orthodox argument, in fact the only argument, now advanced against this natural and legitimate demand is,

that the mass are silent and have not joined in the cry. This is an ingenuous argument; for an inarticulate mass will never speak and the reforms will not come. But have the mass at any time and in any country spoken out before any reform has been granted ? The hydra-headed mass speak only in times of rebellion or revolution and even then under the inspiration of their leaders who rise out of the educated minority, but their voice is not heard amid a process of salient evolution in the benefits of which they are bound to participate. Did the mass in England cry for the *Magna Charta* or the Petition of Rights or the Reform Bill ? The educated few have everywhere represented the ignorant many, and history tells us that they have always been their unaccredited spokesmen. And then whose fault is it that the masses of India are dumb and illiterate ? The Congress has cried and Congressmen have tried their utmost for the spread of elementary education and they have been told that the time has not yet arrived for universal compulsory education for the masses. We do not know if the Astrological Almanac is being consulted for an auspicious day for such an undertaking. It all looks like the trite old, yet never hackneyed, game of "head I win, tail you lose."

Solicitude for the Poor, Caste System

Then as a corollary to the above, a further argument is advanced that there are so many communities and sub-divisions in this caste-ridden country that if self-government were conceded King Stork would one by one swallow up all the frogs and a Babel of disorder would follow in which men would run at one another's throats and render settled government impossible. Such keen solicitude for the poor and the weak is no doubt highly creditable to an enlightened administration, but in a country where more than two-fifths of the population live on insufficient food; where in 42 years there were 22 famines carrying away millions of human beings; a country which is admittedly the poorest and yet the most heavily taxed as well as burdened with the costliest of administrations; where the average earnings of the free citizen are almost half of what the prisoner in the jail gets for his food and raiment : where floods devas-

tate and Malaria decimates without any remedy or redress, while piles of reports and recommendations of Commissions and Committees cover the archives of the Secretariats; where the poor have often to drink muddy liquids to appease their thirst; and where five out of every six children even in moderately decent families of the poor are allowed to grow up in ignorance. I say in a country like that men may not be wanting who might consider such paternal solicitude as too much of a protestation. I do not at all suggest that the Government of the country is solely or even primarily responsible for everyone of these untoward circumstances; but what I do maintain is that the apprehensions of the Government and its organs are ill-founded and unjustified. No doubt there is the beautiful caste system, but there is also the counter-balancing distribution of labour and profession. The caste imposes only social restrictions and no political disabilities. Caste system in one shape or other and to some extent obtains in almost every society, but has nowhere stood as an insurmountable bar in the way of its political or economic development. This is then no redeeming feature of the Indian social system with all its defects ? Is there any country where every home is an asylum for the poor, and where the poor and the destitute are fed and clothed by their richer countrymen so generously ? Is there any other people among whom the prevailing religions enjoin public charity without distinction of caste, colour or creed to such an extent that it has led the advocates of modern civilisation to characterise it as encouraging "professional mendicancy" ?

Government no doubt honestly tries to mitigate the sufferings of the poor in the hour of their distress; but is any notice taken of the millions who are silently succoured by the well to do Hindus and Mohammedans out of their own pocket in accordance with the injunctions of their religions ? Then, has not the Congress cried for 30 years for the amelioration of the condition of masses as persistently as for political rights and privileges ? If such be the case, where is the ground and where the evidence for the apprehension so keenly felt and so persistently echoed and re-echoed ?

The Labour Party in the British Parliament is only of yester-

day's growth and where Parliamentary institutions deferred till the grant of a nominal representation of its vast working population ? And was it Cobden or Kier Hardie that organised the Anti-Corn Law League or improved the wages of the labouring class. And then are not caste prejudices fast dying out under the inexorable pressure of our environments and are not men of talents rising out of the ranks of the so-called depressed classes who are receiving the ungrading homage of the Brahmans and other superior castes ? Lastly, would not there always be the paramount authority of the Government to correct abuses and remedy injustice wherever committed ? Blood is always thicker than water and people are not therefore wanting amongest us who honestly regard the question of the strong and the weak only as plausible pretext and not a serious argument.

Hindu-Muslim Question

Another difficulty put forward is the eternal question of the difference between the Hindu and the Mohammedans of India. But the game has been nearly played out, and the Hindus and the Mohammedans have practically solved the questions. It is more than five years ago that some of us dreamt dream which appears now not to have been all a dream. The Congress and the League have come to meet at the same place and the day may not be far distant when in spite of the Siren-song which has so far diverted their course they will come to meet in the same pavilion and at the same time.

The Hindus and Mohammedans are rapidly converging towards each other, and indeed it would be miracle if they did not so converge and if they continued to fly off at a tangent despite the irresistible attraction of the great centripetal force which is drawing them towards their common centre. The stock argument based upon occasional differences and disturbances between Hindus and Musalmans cannot have much force. These are confined mostly to lower classes of people on either side. It is neither fair no judicious to exaggerate their importance. There are Hindus and Musalmans side by side in every Native State. In the Musalman State of Hyderabad with a Hindu population of nearly 70 per cent, and the Hindu State

of Kashmir with 60 per cent Musalman subjects, we do not hear of any cow-killing riots or Moharrum disturbances or of any ill-feeling between the two communities. And one wonders why a different state of things should prevail in British territories. A nationality is now no longer either a religious or a social federation, but a political unit. Diverse races professing different forms of religion and following distinct varieties of manners, customs and traditions easily submit to a common political faith to work out their common destiny. The Picts and the Scots, the Saxons and the Normans, the Protestants and the Catholics are now all welded into the great British nation. The Teutons and the Slavs, the Prussians and the Poles have formed one of the mightiest empires which has lit up a world-wide conflagration while in that curious Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary the Magyars, the Hungarians, Czechs, the Poles, the Slavs, the Serbs, the Croates and the Rumanians have formed themselves into a national federation of no ordinary solidarity and strength.

The Hindus and Musalmans are both of common Aryan stock, while Hindu anthropology traces them to a common descent within the legendary period of their ancient history. Neither the Parsis nor the Mohammedans of India owe any temporal allegiance either to the Shah of Persia or the Sultan of Turkey. They are now Indians as much as the Hindus. But why indulge in speculations against a settled fact ? I think I break no secret when I announced to you that the Hindu-Muslim question has been settled and the Hindus and Musalmans have agreed to make a united demand for self-government. The All-India Congress Committee and the representatives of the Muslim League who recently met in conference at Calcutta have after twodays' deliberations in one voice resolved to make a joint demand for a Representative Government in India. There are little differences on one or two minor points of detail, but they count for nothing. The report of the Conference will shortly be placed before you and I need not enter into details. We have many historic days, but I believe the 17th November will rank among the brightest and the most notable of them all. I would now appeal to both the communities to sink all their

minor domestic differences and present a solid united front for the realisation of their common destiny within the Empire. Only the seeds having been sown, the seedlings have just sprouted ? and for God's sake let us not quarrel over the division of the crop which still demands our combined labour and attention before the harvest comes. What are special electorates and communal representations when there is really no electorate and no representation among a people ? What matters if Dinshaw Edulji Wacha or Surendra Nath Banerjee or Mazhurul Hoque were to represent us in our National Assembly ? They are three in one and one in three. Remember what the great *Yudhishthira* said adressing the Kauravas and the Pandavas.

Making a different application of this noble saying of the wise and saintly Yudhishthira we may say that we may be five brothers on one side and a hundred brothers on the other, but in a common cause we are a hundred and five brothers undivided and indivisible.

Gentleman, an ounce of fact is said to be worth a ton of theories and while we here are quarrelling over the principles of the problem, the Americans have quietly and speedily solved it in the Philippines.

The Philippines

The Philippine islands from their discovery by Villalobos in the reign of Philip of Spain were under a form of despotic government compared to which the despotism of John Company was an unmixed blessing. The archipelago is inhabited by a congeries of people speaking different languages and observing different forms of religion of the most primitive type. The Negritoes, Negroes, the Panayas, the Mindanos, a dark woolly people, Indonesians, the Malayans, the Chinese, the Spaniards and a number of non-descripts inhabit the islands. Of ancient civilization and tradition these people have none, while as to their enlightenment and culture the world has heard nothing. The Americans conquered the islands in 1898 and the only claim of the people to the consideration of their liberators was that they had at first formed themselves into a band of insurgents under

the leadership of an ambitious man named Aguinaldo who afterwards aspired to expel their benefactors. A provisional government was however soon established by the Americans and peace restored in the country. Quite recently a proposal was brought forward in the House of Representatives of the Uuited States for the granting of Home Rule to the Philippines and in the discussion which followed, some maintained that it should be accomplished in two years, some in four years, while others held that there should be no time limit; but all agreed that the islanders must be given their freedom and the archipelago should not form a permanent appendage to the United States which since the Civil War had positively refused to go in for territorial aggrandisement even in the face of the splendid opportunities which the New World presented to them. The last resolution was carried; and the American Governor in addressing the Philippinos on the occasion of granting them a substantial majority in the Legislative Assemblies in 1913 said : "We regard ourselves as trustees, acting not for the advantage of the United States, but for the benefit of the people of tne Philippines. Every step we take will be taken with a view to the independence of the islands and as a preparation for that independence. The administration will take one step at once. It will give to the native citizens of the islands a majority in the Commission and thus in the Upper as well as in the Lower House of the Legislature. We place within your reach the instruments of redemption. The door of opportunity stands open, and the event, under Providence is in your hands. The triumph is as great for us as it is for you." Noble words these and nobly have the Americans come forward to fulfil them. As a result of this announcement the following measures have been introduced.

The Central Government in the Philippines is composed of the Governor-General, who is the chief executive and President of the Philippine Commission, and eight commissioners, three Americans and five Philippines. The Philippine Commission constitutes the Upper House and the elective Philippine Assembly the Lower House of the Legislative body. The members of the Assembly hold office for four years, and the Legislature elects two Resident Commissioners to the United States, who

hold office for the same term. These are members of the United States' House of Representatives with a voice, but not a vote. The islands are divided into 36 provinces of which 31 are regular and the rest special. The Government of each of the regular provinces is vested in a provincial board composed of a Governor and two vocals. The Governor is the chief executive of the province and presiding officer of the board. He and the vocals of the board are all elected by popular vote. The Government of towns is practically autonomous, the officials being elected by the qualified voters of the municipalities and serving for four years. The Jone's Bill of Independence introduced in the United States Legislature proposed to confer complete independence on the Philippines not later then four years from the passing of the bill. In place of the present Philippine Commission, which is abolished, the Philippinos are to elect a Senate.

The house is already elected by the people, and with the election of the Senate, the electorate is to be increased by about 60,00,000. As about 20,00,000 Philippines vote, now the new law will grant voting rights to about 80,00,000, The office of Governor-General is retained and there is to be a Vice-Governor, an American whose duties are to be fixed by the Governor General. The functions of the Legislature are limited so as to provide that the coinage, currency, and immigration laws shall not be made without the approval of the President of the United States. Finally, all Americans residing in the Islands who desire to vote must become citizens of the Islands. The Republican points out also that the preamble of the bill fixes no specific date for the granting of independence, but simply states that it has always been the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognise their independence as soon as a suitable government can be established therein. Therefore, as justly pointed out by the Indian Patriot, "enlarged powers of self-government are granted in order that by the use and exercise of popular franchise and governmental power, they may better be prepared fully to assume the responsibilities and enjoy all the privileges of complete independence."

Thus a complete autonomous federal government has al-

ready been established in the islands in which the Philippines largely preponderate over the Americans and in which the actual administration has been substantially transferred to them. There is no bureaucracy in the Philippines, nor a Jingo press there. No, there is no ruler and ruled, no sedition and no internments. Self-government has established a reign of peace and contentment. Every Philippine is now a free citizen unemasculated by the operation of any Arms Act and unfettered by any Press Law. Are the arm-chair critics who so lavishly indulge in abusing the Indian Nationalists for their "extravagant hopes," and "unrelisable demands" prepared to give any explanation of this phenomenal progress of the Philippines under the suzerainty of America ? What is the difference between the Union Jack and the Star and the Stripes ? Let Sir William Wedderburn, who was as distinguished a member of the Indian Civil Service as his views have always commanded respect for their sobriety, soundness and moderation answer. Sir William commenting on the question of self-government as viewed in reference to the Philippines pertinently asks, "Can anybody show valid cause why this good example (of America) should not be followed by the British Government with regard to India ? Are the Philippines in any respect superior to the people of India ? Or, is that the British people are inferior to the Americans in love of principle and moral courage ?" We pause for a reply as to which of the alternatives is correct. Sir William then adds. "The problem in India is much simpler, for India does not ask for a termination of the British connection, but I can say with certainty that among our best friends in India there exists grave disquiet, produced by the silence of the Government regarding their future policy, accompanied by irritating retrogressive legislation in Parliament and fresh activity of police repression in India."

If the Philippines have developed an instinct for self-government within 18 years no amount of reasoning or argument can satisfy the Indian mind that the Hindus, the Mohammedans, the Parsis and the Christians of India have not made even a near approach to it within 160 years and if they are not yet fit for self-government, I despair of a time when they may be so.

Amendment of Constitution

There is yet another question which ought to be clearly understood in connection with our demand for self-government. Is it any appreciable increase in our share in the administration that we demand on the permanent basis of the present system of government ? Or is it a thorough change in the constitution irrespective of all considerations of larger employment of the children of the soil in the public services ? To be more explicit, let us put the question in this naked form. Supposing the Public Service Commission, whose report is still a sealed book to the people of this country, has recommended that no less than one half or even two-thirds of the appointments in the different civil service should be filled up by Indians, but that the present bureaucracy must always continue to be in power, would such a recommendation,[1] even if accepted by the Government, satisfy Indian aspirations ? I know the answer will be in the negative. Such an arrangement will only serve to add to a number of Indian bureaucracy without adding a bit to the powers and privileges of the people, and there would not be much to choose between the present bureaucracy and its proposed substitute.

It is the system and not the personnel of the administration from which the people suffer. It is the rotten soil that breeds rank weeds. It is only a radical change in the form and constitution of the Government, however slow or tentative in its character, but steady and continuous in its development, that can satisfy the growing spirit of the Indian people and remove their grievances. If the British Parliament were after the war to hold in one hand a very high percentage of the public employments and to ask India to choose between the two, I am sure, she would unhesitatingly grasp the one and let go the other.

Anarchy and Repression

Gentlemen, the new spirit to which I have already referred frankly refuses to believe in the liberalisation of a bureaucratic administration. The spirit is common both to the young and the old with this difference only that, while the old would proceed cautiously and steadily, the young are moved by the enthu-

siastic ardour natural to their age. If the Congress has so far persistently advanced the claims of the people to a larger share in the various public services, it has done so more from an economic point of view than for the satisfaction of its demands for a national government. Irresponsible critics who denounce the new spirit ought to remember that it is not a sudden and abnormal growth in the Indian mind. It has appeared in Egypt, in Turkey, in Persia, in China and, in fact, in every country where autocratic rule has prevailed. All these countries have undergone the hammering process and everywhere hammering has served only to beat soft metals into hard ones. Anarchism and lawlessness have in all these countries followed in the wake of misrule.

The appearance of anarchism in the land has been a source of the deepest concern to the Government and the people alike. Both are interested in its eradication, alike for the ends of peaceful government and the progressive development of the country on constitutional lines. But we must know what the disease is before we can apply the remedy. Anarchism has its roots deep in economic and political conditions. One asks how is that free countries like England and France or America are free from this taint. There are the blessings of freedom, of industrial progress and of peace and contentment which follow in their reign over the land. Let those great blessings be ours and anarchism will disappear. It is of western origin. It is an excrescence which ought to disappear with healing measures calculated to defuse broadcast the blessings of political contentment and of material prosperity. By all means punish evil doers and iniquitous breaker of the law who commit wanton assaults on the lives and properties of their fellow countrymen. But repression is not the true remedy. Repression when unwisely enforced and against the sober sense and judgement of the community must aggravate the situation and strengthen those forces of discontent which are breeding ground of anarchism. "The sovereign remedy for public distempers", says Burke, "is conciliation nor coercion, for though coercion may succeed for a time, it always leaves room for coercing again." A sufficient trial has been given to the orthodox method of the bureaucracy

and the Congress urges that the other method should now be tried.

The Assurance

Ladies and gentlemen, we are roundly charged with revelling in "extravagant hope" and indulging in unrealisable demands." But we have long refused to profit by the very friendly and eminently practical suggestions oı those whose only claim to be regarded as Statesmen or Englishmen consists in the proud names which they have like the "bogus medical degree" assumed for themselves. We do not judge the great British nation by specimens of this kind, we do no honour to the English name. If we had done that, the Congress would have long ago wound up its business and gone into voluntary liquidation. The descendents of Howard and Wilberforce, of Burke and Bright, or Macaulay and Maine and of Canning and Rippon are not yet extinct. It is a nation of giants who refuse to tolerate injustice and prepetuate serfdom wherever they may exist, if only they are satisfied of their existence, and who possess a responsive heart to the call of freedom. It has been truly said that it is not Britain's heart, but Britain's ear that has been so long deaf to the wail that has heen raised in this country. But the din of war risen above all and the thrilling demonstrations of India's fidelity to the British connection have disabused many a robust mind in England of the hobgoblin stories to which they have been so lavishly treated in past, and liberals and conservatives have, therefore, with equal emphasis come to recognise as rational what has been denounced as "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands" of the Indian people. Let us recall today only a few of the many assurances that have been given to India by some of the responsible ministers and men who are now guiding the destinies of the Empire.

The *Times*, the leading organ of conservative opinion in England, has been struck with the unexpected demonstration in India and frankly admitted that the Indian problem must be henceforth looked at from a different point of view. "On our part", says the great journal, "when we have settled account with the enemy, India must be allowed a more ample place

in the councils of the Empire." Both Mr. Montagu and Mr. Roberts, as Under-Secretary for India, have from time to time expressed themselves in no uncertain voice as to the correct lines upon which the Indian administration requires to be revised and modified, Mr. Montagu's honest interpretation of Lord Hardinge's despatch of August 1911 is well-known, while Mr. Robert speaking from his place in the House of Commons has frankly acknowledged that with the intellectual classes in India this outburst of loyalty is a "reasoned sentiment based upon considerations of enlightened self-interest", and has at the same time asked the British public to alter "the angle of vision" in their perspective of the Indian problem. Following the *Time*, the Review of Reviews has, in one of its latest numbers, fairly admitted that "India today occupies a higher place in the Empire than ever before and has materially advanced her claims towards self-government, and it is inevitable that, after the war, her outstanding demands should receive the most sympathetic consideration." "We have," the Review adds, "made promises of self-government to Egypt, and it is inconceivable that we should deny the same privileges to India".

At present India is not pressing her claim, but patiently awaits her just due, not as a reward, but as a right which her conduct has shown her worthy of possessing. Lord Haldane who till recently occupied a commanding position in the cabinet said : "The Indian soldiers were fighting for the liberties of humanity, as much as we ourselves. India had given her lives and treasures in humanity's great cause, hence things could not be left as they were. We had been thrown together in the mighty struggle and had been made to realise our oneness, so producing relations between India and England which did not exist before. Our victory would be victory for the Empire as a whole and could not fail to raise it to a higher level." Then at a recent meeting held at Guildhall at the instance of the Lord Mayor, Mr. Asquith, the premier, and Mr. Bonar Law, the erstwhile leader of the opposition and both now united in coalition ministry, have given a joint pledge for the readjustment of India's position in councils of the Empire after the war is over. But, to quote the words of Mr. Bonar Law, why the thing should not

be done "while the metal was still glowing *red-hot* from the furnace of the war "and the promised rewards of India's comradeship and co-operation should be all relegated to the indefinite future and not one of them even shadowed forth in the present programme of the Imperial Government, seems to be inexplicable. Quite recently Lord Chelmsford is reported to have said that "the war by giving India an opportunity to show the practical importance to the Empire had stirred Indian aspirations for developments, politically and economically. It would be his endeavour to secure a practical response to this new desire for progress." His Lordship is said to have added : "My task is to guard India from cramping influences of undue conservatism equally with unpractical revolutionary tendencies."

Now, are these men of less authority, foresight and responsibility than the members of the Indian bureaucracy or its exponents in the Anglo-Indian Press who are ever so laid and positive in denouncing our claims ? Or, are these assurances all a hoax intended to delude the Indian mind ? We positively refuse to accept any such view which would be a gross calumny on the great British nation. We have much greater confidence in British statesmanship which may have blundered in many places but has failed nowhere. Gentlemen, we indulge in no gloomy anticipations but we shudder to contemplate the serious effect which the non-fulfilment of these pledges is likely to produce in the minds of the Indian public. The Partition of Bengal which was after all a provincial question brought in its trail an outburst of discontent which like wild fire spread throughout the whole country and necessitated a full brigade of repressive measures to put it down, although its mouldering sparks are not yet fully extinct. And how widespread and far-reaching must be the unrest which is sure to follow a light heated treatment of these solemn pledges and assurances upon which the people have so firmly and so confidently built their future hopes of advancement ?

God forbid that such a calamity should befall India. As loyal subjects of His Majesty, we of the Congress deem it our duty to tell all whom it may concern not to treat the Indian

problem after the war as lightly as some irresponsible and mischievous critics are evidently disposed to do.

Already a subdued note of the "scrap of paper" has been raised in certain quarters. The Charter Act of 1833, the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 and the two gracious messages of King Edward VII and George V still remain unredeemed, and it would be no wise statesmanship to add to the burden of unredeemed pledges.

England has been drawn into the vortex of a titanic struggle for the deliverance of Belgium and Serbia. God grant, she may come out with her brave allies completely triumphant in her heroic efforts.

She has however a much greater stake in India and India has a much greater claim to her consideration. Let us hope she will not'fail to be at least as just as she is generous. After the war is over a complete readjustment of the Empire will have to be made; all its compotent parts will have to be co-ordinated and harmonised with one another and with the parent state. India alone cannot be left out of this programme. She must be admitted into common and equal partnership with the colonies on terms of equal rights and obligations of the Empire, enjoying equal laws and equal rights of British citizenship throughout that Empire.

The collar of a Dependency should be removed from her neck and the coronet of an autonomous, self-governing state placed upon her head. What a glorious federation it would then be, more glorious than that of the Roman Empire or of any that the world has yet seen.

England would de well to remember in her own interest that she cannot maintain a condition of perpetual pupilage anywhere within her world-wide possessions without slowly and imperceptibly innoculating herself with its poison in her own home. Demoralisation in one part of a body however remote, must inevitably result, if not remedied, in the ultimate deterioration of the whole system. Present experience has shown that

for greater cohesion and solidarity of the Empire its component parts must be brought into closer touch and more intimate relations between one another and the mother-country.

India alone cannot be excluded from equal consideration in the coming readjustment, for if she were to be so excluded. India's position is sure to be worse than even at present. If the colonies are allowed a representation in the Federal Council of the Empire, they will undoubtedly have a voice in the administration of India and, for aught we know, their representatives may sometimes find a place in the cabinet and also become the Secretary of State for India. If India is denied such representation she will be further degraded as being subject also to the colonies. There is a serious danger in admitting the colonies to a participation in determining the policy that is to be followed in relation to India, for the colonial mind is saturated with the colour prejudice which would thus be reflected in the Government of India. Such a change in the "angle of vision" it would be dreadful to contemplate. If the equilibrium of the Empire is to be maintained, India must also be thrown into the scale. She must be freely admitted into the partnership and given a free constitution like that of the self-governing dominions and a fair representation in the federal council along with the colonies.

Our Demands

Ladies and gentlemen, I now propose as a summary to the foregoing discussions to submit a few "daring and impertinent" proposals for the consideration of the Government both in England as well as in India. A memorandum presented by nineteen members of the Supreme Legislative Council has met with the criticisms of both sides. Some have regarded it as premature and falling short of our demands, while others have denounced it is extravagant. The citcumstances which brought about the submission of this memorandum have already been explained to the public; while, as I read it, this memorandum represents neither the irreducible minimum nor the unenhancible maximum of our demands; nor do I understand the signatories to it to mean that their proposals are to be carried out on the morning

following the day on which the Treaty of Berlin may be signed. The signatories to the memorandum have, however, done me one great service. They have borne the burnt of the fusillade and made my passage less difficult, so as to enable me to press forward unnoticed under cover of their fire. As to the other side of the shield, our misfortune is that we are unable to see where the extravagance comes in.

We have no superfluities in any direction and for such a people as ourselves to indulge in extravagance seems to be out of question.

Extravagance may seize the minds of those who have got enough and to spare. However that may be, here are our demands which, God willing, are bound to be fulfilled at no distant date.

1. India must cease to be a dependency and be raised to the status of a self-governing state as an equal partner with equal rights and responsibilities as an independent unit of the Empire.

2. In any scheme of readjustment after the war, India should have a fair representation in the Federal Council like the colonies of the empire.

3. India must be governed from Delhi and Simla, and not from Whitehall or Downing Street. The Council of the Secretary of State should be either abolished or its constitution so modified as to admit of substantial Indian representation on it. Of the two Under-Secretaries of State for India one should be an Indian and the salaries of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British estimates as in the case of the Secretary for the Colonies. The Secretary of State for India should, however, have no more powers over the Government of India than those exercised by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the case of the dominations. India must have complete autonomy financial, legislative as well as administrative.

4. The Government of India is the most vital point in the proposed reforms. It is the fountain head of all local administrations and unless we can ensure its progressive character any

effective reform of the local Governments would be impossible. For this the services must be completely separated from the State and no member of any service should be a member of Government.

The knowledge and experiences of competent members of a service may be utilised in the developments, but they should not be allowed to be members of the Executive Council or the Cabinct of the Government itself.

5. The Executive Government of India should vest in the Governor-General with a number of ministers not less than one half of whom should be Indian elected by the elected non-official Indian members of the Supreme Legislative Council. These members should hold office for five years. Thus this ministry of the Viceroy will possess the composite character of a parliamentary and non-parliamentary cabinet.

6. The Upper House of Representatives in Canada is composed of 90 members.

The Supreme Legislative Council in India should consist of at least 150 members.

These members should be all elected. But for the transitory period one-fifth may be appointed by the Cabinet, not more than one-fifth of whom may be officials.

7. The annual budget should be introduced into the Legislative Council like Money Bills, and except the military estimates. the entire Budget should be subject to the vote of the Council.

8. The Provincial Governments should be perfectly autonomous, each Province developing and enjoying its own resources, subject only to a contribution towards the maintenance of the Supreme Government.

9. A Provincial administration should be vested, as in the case of the Supreme Government, in a Governor with a cabinet not less than one-half of whom should be Indians elected by the non-official elected Indian members of its Legislative Council.

10. The Provincial Legislative Council should in the case of a major province consist of 100 members and in the case of a minor province 75 members, all of whom should be elected by the people and each district must have at least one representative of its own. For the transitory period there should of course be the same conditions and restrictions as in the case of the Supreme Legislative Council.

11. As the executive and the legislative functions are to be separated, so there must be complete separation of the judicial from the executive functions of this State. The judicial administration, whether civil or criminal, should be wholly vested in the High Courts both as regards control as well as the pay, prospect and promotion of its officers. The High Courts should be subordinate only to the Supreme Government.

12. The Arms Act should be repealed or so modified as to place the Indians exactly on the same footing with the Europeans and Eurasians. The Press Act should be removed from the Statute Book and all the repressive measures withdrawn.

13. India should have a national militia to which all the races should be eligible under proper safeguards and they should be allowed to volunteer themselves under such conditions as may be found necessary for the maintenance of efficiency and discipline. The Commissioned ranks in the army should be thrown open to His Majesty's Indian Subjects.

14. A full measure of local self-government should be immediately granted throughout the country, and the corporations of the Presidency towns, the District and the Taluk boards and the district municipal corporations should be made perfectly self-governing bodies with elected members and elected chairmen of their own. They should be free from all official control except such as may be legally exercised by the Government direct.

15. Mass education should be made free and compulsory. Suitable provisions should also be made for the development and encouragement of indigenous industries.

The above is a summary of our demands. We do not fix any time-limit, for the duration of the war is uncertain and there must be a transitory period through which the process must pass. But if we fix no time-limit, we agree to no indefinite postponement either. Some of these proposals can and ought to be immediately carried out and there is no reason why they should wait for the termination of the war; while there are others which cannot of course be settled until the time for the readjustment of the Empire arrives, but we must be distinctly understood to maintain that this period should not be treated as further extension granted to the present system of administration and its methods. There must be henceforth a distinct tendency visible in every branch of the administration to conciliate the people and inspire trust and confidence in the future policy of the Government. As words without thoughts never go to heaven, so promises without performance and sympathy without action can never touch the hearts of a people. Patience has often been prescribed as the sovereign remedy for all distempers; but it cannot be denied that when the most skilful physician is unable for a long time to show any sign of improvement and on the contrary there are continued symptoms of aggravation, a suspicion naturally may arise in the mind of the patient as to the skill of the physician or the efficiency of his methods. On our part, gentlemen, we must be content to ascend.

Step by Step

It is no argument to say that you have long acquired the capacity to make the ascent. You might have ten years before safely tried the experiment but it does not follow that you can therefore cover ten steps or even two steps at a time. Whenever you have to ascend you must begin from the base and rise steadily and cautiously upwards. Of course, it would be no progress if you gain one step and lose two. Doubtless we ought carefully to see that we lose no ground and then even if our progress be slow, we may be sure of reaching our destined goal.

The British Committee

Gentlemen, one word about our British agency in London.

It is perfectly superfluous for me to point out that no business concern can be successfully carried on without a well-equipped and efficient agency at its principal place of business. In England is the real seat of power and the battle of India must be fought on the British soil. Though it is we who must fight it out, we must have the British public as our ally. That public must be informed and influenced so as to enable it to come to a correct judgment of our case. There is an erroneous impression in certain quarters that as our grievances are so numerous and so palpable they must be known to the British people also. But who is there to carry your message to England ? You certainly cannot expect Reuter to do it. You certainly do not believe that retired Anglo-Indians will proclaim their own defects and shortcomings.

On the contrary, there are the standing official reports always to present a roseate view of the administration taking credit for whatever is good, throwing the entire blame for all that is bad on your shoulders and justifying all sorts of repressive measures. The British public in their ignorance easily swallow all these *ex-parte* cock and bull stories and consider the Indian administration to be a perfect utopia. So you must have a counsel of your own to represent your case before the great tribunal of public opinion in Great Britain if you do not wish judgment to go against you by default. Sir William Wedderburn is performing this function at no small sacrifice to himself.

India cannot repay the deep debt which she owes to him and his colleagues on the British Committee and the poet's words are her only satisfaction that a grateful mind by owing owes not, but always remains indebted and discharged. Mr. H.E.A. Cotton, the worthy son of a worthy father, following in the footsteps of his illustrious parent, has been doing yeoman's service to India. The British Committee and its sole organ India must be maintained at all cost if we are to carry on our operations at the vital front. It has always seemed to me of the utmost importance to associate with the British Committee at least one competent Indian permanently located in England. The great services rendered there some years back by the late

Mr. W.C. Bonerjee and recently by our distinguished countryman Sir Krishna Govinda Gupta, ought to be an object lesson to us. But for all these a permanent Congress Fund is an imperative necessity. The granting of small doles by Congress every year which are always larger in their arrears than in their payments and the undignified spectacle of one of the leaders every year extending his beggarly Brahmanical hand for such pittance is not the way of practical men engaged in practical business. There is no dearth of men who are rolling in the superfluities of their unearned heritage. Large sums of money are still spent throughout the country in mere shows and ceremonies of the most temporary interest; and if we cannot even raise so much as twice a couple of lakhs of rupees for the uplifting of the nation; then are we rightly treated by our rules as an inferior race and twitted by our critics as mere men of words indulging in "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands."

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid I have exhausted your patience although I have failed to exhaust my theme. My last words are those bright young faces whom I see before me. My dear young friends and countrymen, you are our hostages to posterity. Every generation has perpetual devolution and succession of rights and responsibilities. The acquisition of one generation becomes the heritage of the next and it is the duty of each generation not only to enjoy what it receives from its predecessor, but also to transmit its heritage consolidated, augmented and improved to the one coming after it. Many of those who preceded you in this national struggle have been gathered to their fathers while those who are to press forward to take their place and hold aloft the banner which is drooping from their sinking hand.

Like the mother of the Grachil India, poor India, shorn of her prisitine grandeur and glory, has only to boast of you as her "precious jewels." Remember of what great nation you are born. It was for you that in the early morning of the world the Vedas were revealed and in a later period democratic Islam

came with the Quran and the practical Parsi with the Zend Avesta. Yours is the heritage of three of the most ancient civilisations of the world which have formed as it were a glorious confluence of three streams in this sacred land of yours ; while to these in the dispensation of an inscrutable Providence a fourth has recently been added to constitute a Sagarn Sangama for the deliverance of your race. It was for you that Vyasa wrote and Valmiki sung, and it was for you that Patanjali evolved the loftiest of philosophies and the Geeta expounded the sublime mysteries of life. It was here that more than two thousand yeas ago *Buddha Gautama*, the truest and greatest benefactor of mankind, first taught the doctrine of universal brotherhood of man, which now sways the minds of one fifth of the population of the habitable globe ; and it was here that five hundred years ago Sree Chaitanya preached the gospel of love, fraternity and equality from the banks of the Ganges to the banks of the Narbada ; and now modern civilization is prostituting science, filling the air, a land and water, with deadly engines for the destruction of God's creation. But let us not be great only in the worship of a great past. A mighty wave of change is surging throughout this world and India is passing through a momentous transition. Her future is in your hands. You can either make or mar that future. If I were asked, what was the first demand of the Motherland upon the children at this juncture, I would unhesitatingly answer that it is Patriotism. And the second?—Patriotism. And the third?—Patriotism. I do not mean that morbid sentiment which rises like a rocket and falls like a stone ; not that sentiment which takes a man off his feet and lands him in disasters ; not that seniment which ponders to passion and does not appeal to reason: but I mean that supreme virtue which enlightens the head and ennobles the heart, and under the heavenly inspiration of which a man forgets his self and merges his individuality, like a drop in an ocean, in the vast all-absorbing interest of his country, feeding only on self-sacrifice and ever growing on what it feeds. To the Indian Nationalists their country must be their religion "taught by no priests but by the beating hearts" and her welfare their common faith "which makes the many one." Hushed be the whispers of jealousy and spite and silenced be the discordant notes of can-

cerous dissensions amongst you, Sink all your differences in a supreme common cause. Unite and stand solidly shoulder to shoulder resolved either to conquer or to die. Or, what is life worth if we cannot live like men ? Firm and resoultion in your purpose, be always manly and dignified in your attitude, and sober and cautious in your steps. Be loyal to your king and devoted to your country. Difficult as your task is, constitutional must be your method : There is no royal road to freedom. Reverses there must be, but reverses should only stiffen your backs. Do not despair, for despair is the keynote of failure.

The pendulum may be swinging forward and backward, but look up and see the hand of invisible. Time is perpetually marking its progress on the dial of the destiny of your country. Above all, remember that nations are not born but made. They must grow from within but cannot be made to grow from without. You must stand on your own legs and be prepared to fight it out with heart within and God over head. *Dieu-et-Mon-Droit* is the motto emblezoned on the British Coat of Arms and as citizens of the British Empire 'God and My Right' ought to be your watchword and battle cry in the bloodless revolution which is taking place in this country. Be ambitious but not proud; be humble but aspire to a nobler, manlier and healthier life. What have you to boast of but your vanished glories ? You are uitlanders in your own motherland. In the burning words of the Father of the Congress :

What avail your wealth, your learning,
Empty titles, sordid trade ?
True Self-rule were worth them all,
Nations by themselves are made.

Bande Mataram

2

HOME RULE*

Fellow Delegates and Friends,—Everyone who has preceded me in the Chair has rendered his thanks in fitting terms for the gift which is truly said to be the highest that India has it in her power to bestow. It is the sign, of her fullest love, trust and approval, and the one whom she seats in that chair is, for his year of service, her chosen leader. But if my predecessors found fitting words for their gratitude, in what words can I voice mine, whose debt to you is so overwhelmingly greater than theirs ? For the first time in Congress history, you have chosen as your President one who, when your choice was made, was under the heavy ban of Government displeasure, and who lay interned as a person dangerous to public safety. While I was humiliated, you crowned me with honour, while I was slandered, you believed in my integrity and good faith; while I was crushed under the heel of bureaucratic power, you acclaimed me as your leader; while I was silenced and unable to defend myself, you defended me, and won for me release. I was proud to serve in lowliest fashion, but you lifted me up and placed me before the world as your chosen representative. I have no words with which to thank you, no eloquence with which to reply my debt. My deeds must speak for me, for words are too poor. I turn your gift into service to the Motherland; I consecrate my life anew to her in worship by action. All that I have and am, I lay on the Altar of the Mother, and together we shall cry more by service than by words *Vande Mataram*.

There is, perhaps, one value in your election of me in this crisis of India's destiny, seeing that I have not the privilege to be India-born, but come from that little island in the northern

*Presidential address delivered by Mrs. Annie Besant at the Calcutta Congress held on 26-29,December, 1917.

seas which has been, in the West, the build-up of free institutions. The Aryan emigrants, who spread over the lands of Europe, carried with them the seeds of liberty sown in their blood in their Asian cradle-land. Western historians trace the self-rule of the Saxon villages to their earlier prototypes in the East, and see the growth of English liberty as uprisingly from the Aryan root of the free and self-contained village communities.

Its growth was crippled by Norman feudalism there as its millenia-nourished security here was smothered by the East India Company. But in England it burst its shackles and nurtured a liberty-loving people, and a free Common's House. Here, it similarly burgeoned out in the Congress activities, and more recently into those of the Muslim League, now together blossoming into Home Rule for India. The England of Milton, Cromwell, Sydney, Burke, Paine, Shelley, Wilberforce, Gladstone, the England that sheltered Mazzini, Kossuth, Kropotkin, Stepnaik and that welcomed Garibaldi; the England that is the enemy of tyranny, the foe of autocracy, the lover of freedom, that is the England I would fain here represent to you today. Today when India stands erect, no suppliant people, but a Nation, self-conscious, self-respecting, determined to be free; when she stretches out her hand to Britain and offers friendship not subservience, co-operation not obedience; today let me, western-born but in spirit eastern, cradled in England but India by choice and adoption, let me stand as the symbol of union between Great Britain and India, a union of hearts and free choice, not of compulsion, and therefore of a tie which cannot be broken, a tie of love and of mutual helpfulness, beneficial to both Nations and blessed by God.

Gone to the Peace

India's great leader, Dadabhai Naoroji, has left his mortal body and is now one of the company of the Immortals, who watch over and aid India's progress. He is with W.C. Bonnerjee, and Ranade, and A.O. Hume, and Henry Cotton, and Pherozeshah Mehta, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale—the great men—who,

in Swinburne's noble verse, are the stars which lead us to liberty's altar :

These, O men, shall ye honour,
Liberty only and these.
For thy sake and for all men's and mine.
Browther, the Crowns of them shine,
Lighting the way to her shrine,
That our eyes may be fastened upon her.
That our hands may encompass her knees.

Not for me to praise him in feeble words of reverence and of homage. His deeds praise him, and his service to his country is his abiding glory. Our gratitude will be best paid by following in hls footsteps alike in his splendid courage and his unfaltering devotion, so that we may win the Home Rule whicb he longed to see while with us, and shall see, ere long, from the other world of life, in which he dwells today.

The War and Pre-War Military Expenditure

The great war, into the whirlpool of which Nation after Nation has been drawn, has entered on its fourth year. The rigid censorship which has been established makes it impossible for any outside circle of Government to forecast its duration, but to me, speaking for a moment not as a politician but as a student of spiritual laws, to me its end is sure. For the true object of this war is to prove the evil of, and to destroy, autocracy and the enslavement of one Nation by another, and to place on sure foundations the God-given Right to Self-Rule and Self-Development of every Nation, and the similar right of the individual, of the smaller self, so far as is consistent with the welfare of the larger self of the Nation The forces which make for the prolongation of autocracy—the rule of one—and the even deadlier bureaucracy—the rule of a close body welded into an iron system—these have been gathered together in the Central Powers of Europe—as of old in Ravana—in order that they may be destryed for the New age cannot be opened until the Old passes away. The new civilisation of Righteousness and

Justice, and therefore of Brotherhood, of ordered Liberty, of Peace, of Happiness, cannot be built up until the elements are removed which have brought the old civilisation crashing about our ears.

Therefore, it it necessary that the war shall be fought out to its appointed end, and that no premature peace shall leave its object obtained. Autocracy and bureaucracy must perish utterly, in East and West, and, in order that their germs may not re-sprout in the future, they must be discredited in the minds of men. They must be proved to be less efficient than the Governments of free peoples, even in their favourite game of war, and their iron machinery—which at first brings outer prosperity and success—must be shown to be less lasting and effective than the living and flexible organisations of democratic peoples They must be proved failures before the world, so that the glamour of superficial successes may be destroyed for ever. They have had their day and their place in evolution, and have done their educative work. Now they are out-of-date, unfit for survival, and must vanish away.

When Great Britain sprang to arms, it was in defence of the freedom of a small Nation, guaranteed by treaties, and the great principles she proclaimed electrified India and the Dominions. They all sprang to her side without question, without delay; they heard the voice of old England, the soldier of Liberty, and it thrilled their hearts. All were unprepared. save the small territorial army of Great Britain, due to the genius and foresight of Lord Haldane, and the readily mobilised army of India, hurled into the fray by the swift decision of Lord Hardinge.

The little army of Britain fought for time, fought to stop the road to Paris, the heart of France, fought, falling back step by step, and gained the time it fought for, till India's sons stood on the soil of France, were flung to the front, rushed past the exhausted regiments who cheered them with falling breath, charged the advancing hosts, stopped the retreat, and joined the British army in forming that unbreakable line which wrestled

to the death through two fearful winters—often these soldiers of the tropics, waist-deep in freezing mud—and knew no surrender.

India, with her clear vision, saw in Great Britain the champion of Freedom, in Germany the champion of despotism. And she was rightly—Rightly she stood by Great Britain, despite her own lack of freedom and the coercive legislation which outrivalled German despotism, knowing these to be temporary, because un-English, and therefore doomed to destruction; she spurned the lure of German gold and rejected German appeals to revolt. She offered men and money; her educated classes, her Vakils, offered themselves as volunteers, pleaded to be accepted. Then the never sleeping distrust of Anglo-India rejected the offer, pressed for money, rejected men. And, slowly, educated India sank back, depressed and disheartened, and a splendid opportunity for knitting together the two Nations was lost.

Early in the war, I ventured to say that the war could not end until England recognised that autocracy and bureaucracy must perish in India as well as in Europe. The good Bishop of Calcutta, with a courage worthy of his free race, lately declared that it would be hypocritical to pray for victory over autocracy in Europe and to maintain it in India. Now, it has been clearly and definitely declared that self-government is to be the objective of Great Britain in India, and that a substantial measure of it is to be given at once; when this promise is made good by the granting of the reforms outlined last year in Lucknow, then the end of the war will be in sight. For the war cannot and till the death-knell of autocracy is sounded.

Causes, with which I will deal presently and for which India was not responsible, have somewhat obscured the first eager expressions of India's sympathy, and have forced her thoughts largely towards her own position in the empire. But that does not detract from the immense aid she has given and is still giving. It must not be forgotten that long before the present war, she had submitted—at first while she had no power of remonstrance, and later, after 1835, despite the constant protests

of Congress—to an ever-rising military expenditure, due partly to the amalgamation scheme of 1859, and partly to the cost of various wars beyond her frontiers, and to continually recurring frontier and trans-frontier expenditure in which she had no real interest. They were sent out for supposed Imperial advantages, not for her own.

Between 1859 and 1904, 45 years, Indian troops were engaged in thirty-seven wars and expeditions. There were ten wars; the two Chinese War of 1860 and 1900, the Bhutan War of 1864-65, the Abyssinian Wars of 1858, the Afghan War of 1878-79, and after the massacre of the Kabul Mission, the Second War of 1879-80, ending in an advance of the frontier, in the search for an ever receding "scientific frontier", on this occasion the frontier was shifted, says Keene, "from the line of the Indus to the western slope of the Suleiman range and from Peshawar to Quetta," Egyptian War of 1882, in which the Indian troops markedly distinguished themselves; the Third Burmese War of 1885 ending in the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886; the invasions of Tibet in 1890 and 1904 of Expeditions, or minor Wars, there were 27; to Sitana in 1858 on a small scale and in 1863 on a larger (the "Bitana Campaign"); to Nepal and Sikkim in 1859; to Sikkim in 1864; a serious struggle on expeditions the north west frontier in 1868; against the Lushais in 1871-72, the Daflas in 1874-75, the Nagas in 1875, the Africans in 1877 the Rampa Hill tribes in 1879, the Waziris and Nagas in 1881, the Akhas in 1884, and in the same year an expedition to the Zhob Velley, and a second thither on 1890. In 1888 and 1889, there was another expedition against Sikkim, against the Akozais (the Black Mountain expedition) and against the Hill Tribes of the North-East, and in 1890 another Black Mountain expedition, with a third in 1892. In 1890 came the expedition to Manipur, and in 1891, there was another expedition against the Lushais, and one into the Miranzal Valley. The Chitral expedition occupied 1894-95, and the serious Tirah campaign, in which 40,000 men were engaged, came in 1897 and 1898. The long list—which I have closed with 1904—ends with the expeditions against the Mahsuds in 1901, against the Kabalia in 1902, and the invasion of Tibet, before noted. All

these events explain the rise in military expenditure, and we must add to them the sending of Indian troops to Malta and Cyprus in 1878—a somewhat theatrical demonstration—and the expenditure of some £2,000,000 to face what was described as "the Russian Menace" in 1884. Most of these were due to Imperial, not to Indian policy, any many of the burdens imposed were protested against by the Government of India while others were encouraged by ambitious Viceroys. I do not think that even this long list is complete.

Ever since the Government of India was taken over by the Crown, India has been regarded as an Imperial military asset and training ground, a position from which the jealousy of the East India Company had largely protected her by insisting the army it supported should be used for the defence and in the interests of India alone. Her value to the Empire for military purposes would not so seriously have injured at once her pride and her finances, if the natural tendencies of her mar'ial races had been permitted their previous scope ; but the disarming of the people, 20 years after the assumption of the Government by the Crown, emasculated the Nation, and the elimination of races supposed to be unwarlike, or in some cases too warlike to be trusted, threw recruitment more and more to the north, and lowered the physique of the Bengalis and Madrasis on whom the Company had largely depended.

The superiority of Punjab, on which Sir Michael O'Dwyer so vehemently insisted the other day, is an artificial superiority, created by the Britisq system and policy; and the poor recruitment elsewhere, on which he laid offensive insistence, is due to the same system and policy, which largely eliminated Bengalis, Madrasis and Maharattas from the army. In Bengali, however, the martial type has been received, chiefly in consequence of what the Bengalis felt to be the intolerable insult of the high-handed partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon. On this, Gopal Krishna Gokhle said :

Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy has astonished and gratified all India.

All-India owes a deep debt of gratitude to Bengal.

The sprit evoked showed itself in the youth of Bengal by a practical revolt, let by the elders while it was confined to *Swadeshi* and Boycott, and rushing on, when it broke away from their authority, into conspiracy, assassination and dacoity as had happened in similar revolts with young Italy in the days of Mazzini, and with Young Russia in the days of Stepniak and Korpotkin. The results of their despair, necessarily met by the halter and penal servitude, had to be faced by Lord Hardinge and Lord Carmichael during the present war. Other results, happy instead of disastrous in their nature, were the development of grit and endurance of a high character, shown in the courage of the Bengal lads in the serious floods that have laid parts of the Province deep under water and in their compassion and self-sacrifice in the relief of famine. Their services in the present war—the Ambulance Corps and the replacement of its material when the ship carrying it sank, with the splendid services rendered by it in Mesopotamia; the recruiting of a Bengali regiment for active service, 900 strong, with another 900 reserves to replace wastage, and recruiting still going on—these are instances of the divine alchemy which brings the soul of good out of evil action, and consecrates to service the qualities evoked by rebellion.

In England also, a similar result has been seen in a convict, released to go to the front, winning the Victoria Cross. It would be an act of statesmanship, as well as of divinest compassion, to offer to every prisoner and interned captive, held for political crime or on political suspicions, the opportunity of serving the Empire at the front. They might, if thought necessary, form a separate battalion or a separate regiment, under stricter supervision, and yet be given a chance of redeeming their reputation, for they are mostly very young.

The financial burden incurred in consequence of the above conflicts, and of other causes, now to be mentioned, would not have been so much resented, if it had been impose by India on herself, and if her own sons had profitted by her being used

as a training ground for the Empire. But in this case,as in so many others, she has shared Imperial burdens, while not sharing Imperial freedom and power. Apart from this, the change which made the Army so ruinous a burden on the resources of the country was the system of "British reliefs," the using of India as a training ground for British regiments, and the transfer of men thus trained, to be replaced by new ones under the short service system, the cost of the frequent transfers and their connected expenses being charged on the Indian revenues, while the whole advantage was reaped by Great Britain. On the short service system, the Simla Army Commission declared :

"The short service system recently introduced into the British army has increased the cost and has materially reduced the efficiency of the British troops in India. We cannot resist the feeling that, in the introduction of this system, the interest of the Indian tax-payer was entirely left out of consideration."

The remark was certainly justified, for the short service system gave India only five years of the recruits she paid heavily for and trained, all the rest of the benefit going to England. The latter was enabled, as the years went on, to enormously increase her reserves, so that she has had 400,000 men trained in, and at the cost of India.

In 1863, the Indian army consisted of 140,000 men, with 65,300 white officers. Great changes were made in 1885-1905, including the reorganisation under Lord Kitchener, who became Commander-in-Chief as the end of 1902. Even in this hasty view, I must not not omit reference to the fact that Army Stores were drawn from Britain at enormous cost, while they should have been chiefly manufactured here, so that India might have profitted by the expenditure. Lately under the necessities of war, factories have been turned to the production of munitions ; but this should have been done long ago, so that India might have been enriched instead of exploited. The war has forced an investigation into her mineral resources, that might have been made for her own sake, but Germany was allowed to monopolise the supply of minerals that India could have pro-

duced and worked up, had she enjoyed Home Rule. India would have been richer, and the Empire safer, had she been a partner instead of a possession.

But this side of the question will come under the matters directly affecting merchants, and we may venture to express a hope that the Government help, extended to munition factories in time of war, may be continued to industrial factories in time of peace. The net result of the various causes above mentioned was that the expense of the Indian army rose by leaps and bounds, until, before the war, India was expending £ 21,000,000 as against the £ 28,000,000, expended by the United Kingdom, while the wealthy Dominions of Canada and Australia were spending only 1.5 and 1.25 millions respectively. (I am not forgetting that the Britain was expending over £ 51,000,000 on her Navy, while India was free of that burden, save for a contribution of half a million).

Since 1885, the Congress constantly prevented against the ever-increasing military expenditure, but the voice of the Congress supposed to be the voice of sedition and of class ambition, instead of being, as it was the voice of educated Indian, the most truly patriotic and loyal class of population. In 1885, in the First Congress Mr. P. Rangiah Naidu pointed out that military expenditure had been £ 11,463,000 in 1857 and had risen to £ 16,975,750 in 1884. Mr. D.E. Wacha ascribed the growth to the amalgamation scheme of 1859, and remarked that the Company in 1856 has an army of 254,000 men at a cost of 11.5 millions, while in 1884, the Crown had an army of only 181,000 men at a cost of 17 millions. The rise was largely due to the increased cost of the European regiments, overland transport service, stores, pensions, furlough allowances, and the like, most of them imposed against the resistance of the Government of India, which complained that the charges were "made entirely it may be said, from Imperial considerations, in which Indian interests have not been consulted or advanced". India paid nearly £ 700,000 a year, for instance, for "Home Depots"—Home being England of course—in which lived some 20,000 to 22,000 British soldiers, on the plea that their regiments, not

they, were serving in India. I cannot follow out the many increase cited by Mr. D.E. Wacha, but members can refer to his excellent speech.

Mr. Fawcett once remarked that when the East India Company was abolished, the English people became directly responsible for the Government of India. I cannot, I think, be denied that this responsibility has been so imperfectly discharged that in many respects the new system of Government compares unfavourably with the old. There was at that time an independent control of expenditure which now seems to be almost entirely wanting.

Shortly after the Crown assumed the rule of India, Mr. Disraeli asked the House of Commons to regard India as "a great and solemn trust committed to it by an all-wise and inscrutable Providence." Mr. George Yule, in the Fourth Congress, remarked on this : "This 650 odd members had thrown the trust back upon the hands of Providence, to be looked after as Providence itself thinks best." Perhaps it is time that India should remember that Providence helps those who help themselves.

Year after year the Congress continued to remonstrate against the cost of the army, until in 1902 after all the futile protests of the intervening years, it condemned an increase of pay to Britain soldiers in India which placed an additional burden on the Indian revenues of £ 786,000 a year, and pointed out that the British garrison was unnecessarily numerous, as was shown by the withdrawal of large bodies of British soldiers for services in South Africa and China. The very next year Congress protested that the increasing military expenditure was not to secure India against the internal disorder or external attack, but in order to carry out an Imperial policy; the Colonies contributed little or nothing to the Imperial Military Expenditure, while India bore the cost of about one-third of the whole British Army in addition to her own Indian troops. Surely these facts should be remembered when India's military services to the Empire are now being weighed.

In 1904 and 1905, the Congress declared that the then military expenditure was beyond India's power to bear, and in the latter year prayed that the additional ten millions sterling, sanctioned for Lord Kitchener's reorganisation scheme, might be devoted to education and the reduction of the burden on the raiyats. In 1908, the burdens imposed by the British War Office since 1859 were condemned, and in the next year it was pointed out that the military expenditure was nearly a third of the whole Indian revenue, and was starving education and sanitation.

Lord Kitchener's reorganisation scheme kept the Indian army on a war footing, ready for immediate mobilisation, and on January 1, 1915, the regular army consisted of 247,000 men of whom 75,000 were English; it was the money spent by India in maintaining this army for years in readiness for war, which made it possible for her to go to the help of Great Britain at the critical early period to which I alluded. She spent over £ 20 millions on the military services in 1914-15. In 1915-16 she spent £ 21.8 million. In 1916-17 her military budget had risen to £ 22 millions, and it will be largely exceeded.

On this excess, the Viceroy has spoken very ominously. For the Indian War Loan (excluding Treasury Bills received in England) no less than £ 32 millions sterling have been received and more is coming in. The proceeds of the loan go to the British Government in London, as part of India's special contribution of £ 100 millions. They have been utilised to most war expenditure in India and Mesopotamia on behalf of the British Government. But the Governor-General says :

',This war expenditure will greatly exceed the amount allowed for the budget estimates, which were based on the best data then available, and we now expect that the excess will practically swallow up the whole of the amounts so far received on account of the Indian War Loan, over and above the £ 10 millions assumed in the estimate for budget purposes......India is the financial pivot of the British Empire in the East. Thus, apart from the expenditure to India and Mesopotamia to which I have just referred, she is also undertaking the financing of large

quantities of wheat, jute, manufactures, hides and numerous other essential commodities, which she is supplying to Great Britain, to the Dominions and to the Allied Governments. She is providing funds on a considerable scale to East Africa and Persia, and has had on various occasions to assist Ceylon, Mauritius and Egypt by remittance of specie and otherwise; of course we receive repayment for these services, but as it is not made in India they necessarily constitute a continuing tax on our present resources here.

The taxes levied to meet the calculated deficit will by no means suffice to fill up the great gulf now yawning before us. On whom will those taxes be levied ? It is not unlikely that those *Zamindars* who have been allying themselves with officials and English non-officials against their countrymen, may find themselves disappointed in their allies, and may begin to realise by personal experiences the necessity of giving to Indian legislatures, in which they will be fully represented, control over national expenditure.

Lord Hardinge, the last Viceroy of India, who is ever held in loving memory here for his sympathetic attitude towards Indian aspirations, made a masterly exposition of India's war services in the House of Lords on the third of last July. He emphasised her pre-war services, showing that though 19.5 millions sterling was fixed as a maximum by the Nicholson Committee, that amount had been exceeded in 11 out of the last 13 budgets, while his own last budget had risen to 22 millions. During these 13 years the revenue had been only between 48 and 58 millions, once raising to 60 millions. Could any fact speak more eloquently of India's war services than this proportion of military expenditure compared with her revenue ?

The Great War began on August 4th, and in that very month and in the early part of September, India sent an expeditionary force of three divisions—two in infantry and one cavalry—and another cavalry division joined them in France in November. The first arrived, said Lord Hardinge, "in time to fill a gap that could not otherwise have been filled." He added

pathetically: "There are very few survivors of those two splended divisions of infantry." Truly, their homes are empty, but their sons shall enjoy in India the liberty for which their fathers died in France. Three more divisions were at once sent to guard the Indian frontier, while in September a mixed division was sent to East Africa, and in October and November two more divisions and a brigade of cavalry went to Egypt. A battalion of Indian infantry went to Mauritius, another to the Comeroons, and two to the Persian Gulf, while other Indian troops helped the Japanese in the capture of Tsingtan. 210,000 Indians were thus sent overseas. The whole of these troops were fully armed and equipped, and in addition, during the first few weeks of the war, India sent to England from her magazines "70 million rounds of small-arm ammunition; 60,000 rifles, and more than 550 guns of the latest pattern and type."

In addition to these, Lord Hardinge speaks of sending to England, enormous quantities of material......tents, boots, saddiery, clothing, etc., but every effort was made to meet the ever-increasing demands made by the War Office, and it may be stated without exaggeration that India was bled absolutely white during the first week of the war.

It must not be forgotten, though Lord Hardinge has not reckoned it, that all wastage has been more than filled up, and 450,000 men represent this head, the increase in units has been 30,00,000 and including other military items, India had placed in the field up to the end of 1916 over a million of men.

In addition to this, a British force of 80,000 was sent from India, fully trained and equipped at India's cost, India, receiving in exchange, many months later, 34 Territorial battalionse and 29 batteries, "unfit for immediate employmeut on the frontier or in Mesopotamia, until they had been entirely re-armed and equipped, and their training completed."

Between the autumn of 1914 and the close of 1915, the defence of our own frontiers was a serious matter, and Lord Hardinge says:

information being laid before Parliament, and to the sudden discovery of inability to meet the usual drawings.

It seemed that the Government know only the amount audited, not the amount spent. Payments were entered as "advances", though they were not recoverable, and "the great negligence was evidently that of the heads of departmental accounts." If such a mishap should occur under Home Rule, a few years herce—which heaven forbid—I shudder to think of the comments of the *Englishman* and the *Madras Mail* on the shocking inefficiency of Indian officials.

In September last, our present Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, defended India against later attacks by critics who try to minimise her sacrifices in order to lessen the gratitude which should give birth to justice, and justice should award freedom to India. Lord Chelmsford placed before this Council in studiously considered outline, a summary of what India has done during the past two years. Omitting his references to what was done under Lord Hardinge, as stated above, I may quote from him :

"On the outbreak of war, of the 4,598 British officers on the Indian establishment, 530 who were at home on leave were detained by the War Office for service in Europe, 2,600 Combatant Officers have been withdrawn from India since the beginning of the war, excluding those who proceeded on service with their batteries or regiments. In order to make good these deficiencies and provide for war wastage the Indian Army Reserve of officers was expanded from a total of 40, at which it stood on the 4th August, 1914 to one of 3,000."

The establishment of Indian units has not only been kept up to strength, but has been considerably increased. There has been an augmentation of 20 per cent in the cavalry and recruits enlisted since the beginning of the war is greater than the entire strength of the Indian Army as it existed on the 4th August, 1914.

Lord Chelmsford Rightly Pointed Out

The Army in India has thus proved a great Imperial asset,

and in weighing the value of India's contribution to the war, it should be remembered that India's forces were no hasty improvisation, but were an army in being fully equipped and supplied, which had previouly cost India annually a large sum to maintain.

Lord Chelmsford has established what he calls a "Man-Power Board," the duty of which is to collect and co-ordinate all the facts, with regard to the supply of man-power in India. It has branches in all the provinces. A steady flow of reinforcements supplies the wastage at the various fronts, and the labour required for engineering, transport etc., is now organised in 20 corps in Mesopotamia and 25 corps in France. In addition 60,000 artisans, labourers and specialists are serving in Mesopotamia and East Africa, and some 20,000 menials and followers have also gone overseas. Indian medical practitioners have accepted temporary commissions in the Indian Medical Service to the number of 500. In view of this fact, due to Great Britain's need of help, may we not hope that this service will welcome Indians in time of peace as well as in time of war, and will no longer bar the way by demanding the taking of a degree in the United Kingdom ? It is also worthy of notice that the I.M.S. Officers in charge of district duties have been largely replaced by Indian Medical men : this again, should continue after the war. Another fact, that the Army Reserve of Officers has risen from 40 to 3,000 suggests that, the throwing open of King's Commissions to qualified Indians should not be represented by a meagre nine. If English lads of 18 and 20 are worthy of King's Commissions—and the long roll of slain Second Lieutenants prove it—then certainly Indian lads, since Indians have fought as bravely as Englishmen, should find the door thrown open to them equally widely in their own country and the Indian Army should be led by Indian Officers.

With such a record of deeds as the one I have badly sketched, it is not necessary to say much in words as to India's support of Great Britain and her allies. She has proved up to the built her desire to remain within the Empire, to maintain her tie with Great Britain. But if Great Britain is to call successfully

on her man-power, as Lord Chelmsford suggests in his Man-Power Board, then must the man who fights or labours have a man's rights in his own land. The lesson which springs out of this war is that it is absolutely necessary for the future safety of the Empire that India shall have Home Rule. Had her man-power been utilised earlier there would have been no war, for none would have dared to provoke Britain and India to a contest. But her man-power cannot be utilised while she in a subject Nation. She cannot afford to maintain a large army, if she is to support an English garrison, to pay for their goings and comings, to buy stores in England at exorbitant prices and send them back again when England needs them. She cannot afford to train men for England, and only have their services for five years. She cannot afford to keep huge Gold Reserves in England, and be straightened for cash, while she lends to England out of her Reserves, taken from her over-taxation, £27,000,000 for war expenses, and this, be it remembered, before the great war loan. I once said in England: "The condition of India's loyalty is India's freedom." I may now add : "The condition of India's usefulness to the Empire is India's freedom. "She will tax herself willingly when her taxes remain in the country and fertifise it, when they educate her people and thus increase their productive power, when they foster her trade and create for her new industries."

Great Britain needs India as much as India needs England, for prosperity in peace as well as for safety in war. Mr. Montagu has wisely said that "for equipment in war, a Nation needs freedom in peace." Therefore I say that for both countries alike, the lesson of the war is Home Rule for India.

Let me close this part of my subject by laying at the feet of His Imperial Majesty the loving homage of the thousands here assembled, with the hope and belief that, ere long, we shall lay there the willing and grateful homage of a free Nation.

Causes of The New Spirit in India

Apart from the natural exchange of thought between East

and West, the influence of English education, literature and ideals, the effect of travel in Europe, Japan and the United States of America, and other recognised causes for the changed outlook in India, there have been special forces at work during the best few years to arouse a New Spirit in India, and to alter her attitude of mind.

These may be summed up as :

(a) The awakening of Asia.

(b) Discussions abroad on Alien Rule and Imperial Reconstruction.

(c) Loss of belief in the superiority of the white races.

(d) The awakening of the merchants.

(e) The awakening of the women to claim their ancient position.

(f) The awakening of the masses.

Each of those causes has had its share in the splendid change of attitude in the Indian Nation, in the uprising of spirit of a pride of country, of independence, of self-reliance, of dignity, of self-respect. The war has quickened the rate of evolution of the world, and no country has experienced the quickening more than our Motherland.

(a) The Awakening of India

In a conversation I had with Lord Minto, soon after his arrival as Viceroy, he discussed the so-called "unrest in India," and recognised it as the inevitable result of British education, of English ideals of Democracy, of the Japanese victory over Russia, and of the changing conditions in the outer world. I was therefore not surprised to read his remark that he recognised "frankly and publicly that new aspirations were stirring in the hearts of the people that they were part of a larger movement common to the whole East, and that it was necessary to satisfy them to a reasonable extent by giving them a larger share in the administration."

But the present movement in India will be very poorly understood, if it be regarded only in connection, with the movement in the East. The awakening of Asia is part of a world-movement, which has been quickened into marvellous rapidity by the world war. The world movement is towards Democracy, and for the West dates from the breaking away of the American Colonies from Great Britain, consummated in 1776, and its sequel in the French Revolution of 1789. Needless to say that its root was in the growth of modern science, undermining the fabric of intellectual servitude, in the work of the Encyclopaedist, and in that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and of Thomas Paine. In the East, the swift changes in Japan, the success of the Japanese Empire against Russia, the downfall of the Manchu dynasty in China and the establishment of a Chinese Republic, the efforts at improvement in Persia, hindered by the interferece of Russia and Great Britain with her growing ambition, and the creation of British and Russian "spheres of influence," depriving her of her just liberty and now the Russian Revolution and the probable rise of a Russian Republic in Europe and Asia, have all entirely engaged the conditions before existing in India. Across Asia, beyond the Himalayas, stretch free and self-ruling Nations. India no longer sees as her Asian neighbours the huge domains of a Tsar and a Chinese despot, and compares her condition under British rule with those of their subject populations. British rule profited by the comparison at least until 1905, when the great period of repression set in but in future, unless India wins Self-Government, she will look enviously at her Self-Governing neighbours, and the contract will intensify her unrest.

But even if she gains Home Rule, as I believe she will, her position in the Empire will imperatively demand that she shall be strong as well as free. She becomes not only a vulnerable point in the Empire, as the Asian Nations evolve their own ambitions and rivalries, but also a possession to be battled for. Mr. Laing once said : "India is the milch-cow of England," a *Kamdhenu*, in fact, a cow of plenty; and if that view should arise in Asia, the ownership of the milch-cow would become a matter of dispute, as of old between Vasishta & Vishvamitra. Hence India

must be capable of self-defence both by land and sea. There may be a struggle for the primacy of Asia, for supremacy in the pacific, for the mastery of Australia, to say nothing of the inevitable trade struggles, in which Japan is already endangering Indian industry and Indian trade, while India is unable to protect herself.

In order to face these larger issues with equanimity the Empire requires a contented, strong, self-dependent and armed India, able to hold her own and to aid the Dominions, especially Australia wilh her small population and immense unoccupied and undefended area. India alone has the man-power which can effectively maintain the Empire in Asia, and it is a short-sighted, a criminally short-sighted, policy not to build up her strength, as a Self-Governing State within the Commonwealth of Free Nations under the British Crown. The Englishmen in India talk loudly of their interests; what can this mere handful do to protect their interests against attack in the coming years ? Only in a free and powerful India will they be safe. Those who read Japanese paper know how strongly, even during the War, they parade unchecked their pro-German sympathies and how likely after the War is an alliance between these two ambitious and warlike Nations. Japan will come out of the War with her army and navy unweakened, and her trade immensely strengthened. Every consideration of sane statesmanship should lead Great Britain to trust India more than Japan, so that the British Empire in Asia may rest on the sure foundation of Indian loyalty, the loyalty of a free and contented people, rather than be dependent on the continued friendship of a possible future royal. For international friendships are governed by National interests, and are built on quicksands, not on rock.

Englishmen in India must give up the idea that English dominance is necessary for protection of their interests, amounting, in 1915, to £ 365,3999,000 sterling. They do not claim to dominate the United States of America, because they have invested there £ 688,078,000. They do not claim to dominate the Argentine Republic, because they have invested there about £ 269,808,000. Why then should they claim to dominate India on the ground of their investment ? Britons must give up the idea that India is a possession to be exploited for their own

benefit, and must see her as a friend and equal, a Self-Governing Dominion within the Empire, a Nation like themselves, a willing partner in the Empire, and not a dependent. The democratic movement in Japan, China and Russia in Asia has sympathetically affected India, and it is idle to pretend that it will cease to affect her.

(*b*) *Discussions Abroad on Alien Rule and Reconstruction*

But there are other causes which have been working in India consequent on the British attitude against autocracy and in defence of freedom in Europe, while her attitude to India has, until lately, been left in doubt. Therefore I spoke of a splendid opportunity lost. India at first believed whole heartedly that Great Britain was fighting for the freedom of all Nationalities. Even now, Mr. Asquith declared—in his speech in the House of Commons reported here last October, on the peace resolution of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald—that "the allies are fighting for nothing but freedom, and an important addition—or nothing short of freedom". In his speech declaring that Britain would stand by France in her claim for the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, he spoke of "the intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke." Is such a yoke less intolerable, less wounding to self-respect, here than in Alsace-Lorraine, where the rulers and the ruled are both of European blood, similar in religion and habits ? As the war on India slowly and unwillingly came to realise that the hatred of autocracy was confined to autocracy in the West, and that the degradation was only regarded as intolerable for men of white races; that freedom was lavishly promised to all except to India; that new powers were to be given to the Dominions, but not to India. India was markedly left out of the speeches of statesmen dealing with the future of the Empire, and at last there was plain talk of the White Empire, the Empire of the Five Nations, and "coloured races" were lumped together as the wards of the White Empire, doomed to an indefinite minority.

The peril was passing; the menace unmistakable. The reconstruction of the Empire was on the anvil; what was to be

India's place therein ? The Dominions were proclaimed as partners; was India to remain a dependency ? Mr. Bonar Law made the Dominions strike while the iron was hot; was India to wait till it was cold ? India saw her soldiers fighting for freedom in Flanders, in France, in Gallipoli, in Asia Minor, in China, in Africa; was she to have no share of the freedom for which she fought ? At last she sprang to her feet and cried, in the words of one of her noblest sons : "Freedom is my birthright; and I want it." The words "Home Rule" because her Mantram. She claimed her place in the Empire.

Thus, while she continued to support, and even to increase, her army abroad, fighting for the Empire, and poured out her treasures as water for Hospital Ships, War Funds, Red Cross Organisations and the gigantic War Loan, a dawning fear oppressed her, lest, if she did not take order with her own household, success in the war for the Empire might mean decreased liberty for herself.

The recognition of the right of the Indian Government to make its voice heard in Imperial matters, when they were under discussion in an Imperial Conference, was a step in the right direction. But disappointment was felt that while other countries were represented by responsible Ministers, the representation in India's case was of the Government, of a Government irresponsible to her and not the representative of herself. No fault was found with the choice itself, but only with the non-representative character of the chosen, for they were selected by the Government, and not by the elected members of the Supreme Council. This defect in the resolution moved by the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M.M. Shafi on October 2, 1915, was pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerji. He said :

"My Lord, in view of a situation so full of hope and promise it seems to me that my friend's Resolution does not go far enough. He pleads for official representation at the Imperial Conference; he does not plead for popular representation. He urges that an address be presented to his Majesty's Government, through the Secretary of State for India for official representa-

tion at the Imperial Council. My Lord, official representation may mean little or nothing. It may indeed be attended with some risk; for I am sorry to have to say—but say it I must—that our officials do not always see eye to eye with us as regards many great public questions which affect this country; and indeed their views, judged from our standpoint, may sometimes seem adverse to our interests. At the same time, my Lord, I recognise the fact that the Imperial Conference is an assemblage of officials pure and simple, consisting of minister of the United Kingdom and of the Governing Colonies.

"But my Lord, there is an essential difference between them and ourselves. In their case the Ministers are the elect of the people, their organ and their voice, answerable to them for their conduct and their proceedings. In our case, our officials are public servants in name, but in reality they are the masters of the public. The situation may improve, and I trust it will, under the liberalising influence of Your Excellency's beneficent administration; but we must take things as they are, and not indulge in building castles in the air which may vanish "like the baseless fabric of a vision."

It was said to be an epoch-making event that "Indian representatives" took part in the Conference. Representatives they were, but, as said, of the British Government in India, not of India, whereas their colleagues represented their Nations. They did good work, none the less, for they were able and experienced men, though they failed us in the Imperial Preference Conference and, partially, on the Indentured Labour question. Yet we hope that the presence in the Conference of men of Indian birth may prove to be the proverbial "thin end of the wedge," and may have convinced their colleagues that while India was still a Dependency, India's sons were fully their equals.

The Report of the Public Service Commission, though now too obviously obsolete to be discussed, caused both disappointment and resentment; for it showed that, in the eyes of the majority of the Commissioners, English domination in Indian administration was to be perpetual, and that 30 years hence she

would only hold a pitiful 25 per cent of the higher appointments in the I.C.S. and the Police. I cannot, however, mention that Commission, even in passing, without voicing India's, thanks to the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rahim, for his rare courage in writing a solitary minute of dissent, in which he totally rejected the Report, and laid down the right principles which should govern recruitment for the Indian Civil Services.

India had but three representatives on the Commission; G.K. Gokhale died ere it made its Report, his end quickened by his sufferings during its work, by the humiliation of the way in which his countrymen were treated. Of Mr. Abdur Rahim I have already spoken. The Hon'ble Mr. M.B. Chaubal signed the Report, but dissented from some of its most important recommendations. The whole Report was written "before the flood," and it is now merely an antiquarian curiosity.

India, for all these reasons, was forced to see before her a future of perpetual subordination; the Briton rules in Great Britain, the Frenchman in France, the American in America, each Dominion in its own areas, but the Indian was to rule nowhere; alone among the peoples of the world, he was not to feel his own country as his own. "Britain for the British" was right and natural; "India for the Indians" was wrong, even seditious. It must be "India for the Empire," or not even for the Empire, but "for the rest of the Empire", careless of hereself. "British support for British Trade" was patriotic and proper in Britain, "Swadeshi goods for Indians" showed a petty and anti-Imperial spirit in India. The Indian was to continue to live perpetually, and even thankfully, as Gopal Krishna Gokhale said he lived now, in "an atmosphere of inferiority," and to be proud to be a citizen (without rights) of the Empire, while its other component Nations were to be citizens (with rights) in their own countries first, and citizens of the Empire secondarily. Just as this trust in Great Britain was strained nearly to breaking point came the glad news of Mr. Montagu's appointment as Secretary of State for India of the Viceroy's invitation to him, and of his coming to hear for himself what India wanted. It was a ray of sunshine breaking through the gloom, confidence

in Great Britain revived, and glad [preparation was made to welcome the coming of a friend.

The attitude of India has changed to meet the changed attitude of the Government of India and Great Britain. But let none imagine that the consequential change of attitude connotes any change in her determination to win Home Rule. She is ready to consider terms of peace, but it must be "peace with honour," and honour in this connection means Freedom. If this be not granted, an even more vigorous agitation will begin.

(c) *Loss of Belief in the Superiority of the White Races*

The undermining of this belief dates from the spreading of the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society. Both bodies sought to lead the Indian people to a sense of the value of their own civilisation to pride in their past, creating self-respect in the present and self-confidence in the future. They destroyed the unhealthy inclination to imitate the West in all things, and taught discrimination, the using only of what was valuable in western thought and culture, instead of a more slavish copying of everything. Another great force was that of Swami Vivekananda, alike in his passionate love and admiration for India, and his exposure of the evils resulting from Materialism in the West. Take the following :

"Children of India, I am here to speak to you today about some practical things, and my object in reminding you about the glories of the past is simply this. Many times have I been told that looking into the past only degenerates and leads to nothing, and that we should look to the future. That is true. But out of the past is built the future. Look back, therefore, as far as you can, drink deep of the eternal fountains that are behind, and after that, look forward. march forward and make India brignter, greater, much recall that. We mast learn the elements of our being, the blood that courses in our veins; we must have faith in that blood, and what it did in the past; and out of that faith, and consciousness of greatness, we must build an India yet greater than what she has been."

I know for certain that millions, I say deliberately, millions, in every civilised land are waiting for the message that will save them from the hideous abysmal of materialism, into which modern-money-worship is driving them headlong, and many of the leaders of the new Social Movements have already discovered that Vedanta in its highest form can alone spiritualise their social aspirations.

The process was continued by the admiration of Sanskrit Literature expressed by European scholars and philosophers. But the effect of these was confined to the few and did not reach the many. The first great shock to their belief in white superiority came from the triumph of Japan over Russia, the facing of a huge European Power by a comparatively small eastern Nation, the exposure of the weakness and rottenness of the Russian leaders, and the contrast with their hardy virile opponents, ready to sacrifice everything for their country.

The second great shock has come from the frank brutality of German theories of the State, and their practical carrying over in the treatment of conquered districts and the laying waste of evacuated areas in retreat. The teaching of Bismarck and their practical application in France, Flanders, Belgium, Poland and Serbia have destroyed all the glamour of the superiority of Christendom over Asia. Its vaunted civilisation is seen to be but a thin veneer, and its religion a matter of form rather than of life. Gazing from afar at the ghastly heaps of dead and the hosts of the mutilated, at science turned into devilry and ever inventing new tortures for rending and slaying. Asia may be forgiven for thinking that, on the whole, she prefers her own religions and her own civilisations.

But even deeper than the outer tumult of war has pierced the doubt as to the reality of the ideals of liberty and nationality so loudly proclaimed by the foremost western Nations, the doubt of the honesty of their champions. Sir James Meston said truly, a short time ago, that he had never, in his long experience, known Indians in so distrustful and suspicious a mood as that which he met in them today. And that is so. For long

years Indians have been chafing over the many breaches of promises and pledges to them that remain unredeemed. The maintenance hereof a system of political repression, of coercive measures increased in number and more harshly applied since 1905, the carrying of the system to a wider extent since the war for the sanctity of treaties and for the protection of Nationalities that has been going on, have deepened the mistrust. A frank and courageous statesmanship applied to the honest carrying out of large reforms too long delayed, can alone remove it. The time for political tinkering is past; the time for wise and definite changes is here.

To these deep causes must be added the comparison between the progressive policy of some of the Indian States in matters which most affect the happiness of the people, and the slow advance made under British administration. The Indian notes that this advance is made under the guidance of rulers and ministers of his own race. When he sees that the suggestion made in the People's Assembly in Mysore are fully considered and, when possible, given effect to, he realises that without the forms of power, the members exercise more real power than those of our Legislative Councils. He sees education spreading, new Industries fostered, villages encouraged to manage their own affairs and take the burden of their own responsibility, and he wonders why Indian incapacity is so moch more efficient than British capacity.

Perhaps, after all, for Indians, Indian rule may be the best.

(d) The Awakening of the Merchants

Of the many forces that have created New India, the awakening of the merchants into political life is perhaps the most potent and the most pregnant with happy possibilities. Sir Dorab Tata, in the Industrial Conference in Bombay, 1915, advocated the yoking together of Politics and Industry. It is now coming about. Hitherto the merchants had remained immersed in their own occupations, but they were awakened by the war to the necessity of taking part in politics by finding that those very occupations were threatened with disaster by the attitude of the

Government; as for instance, the refusal to lend a helping hand to industries which had been connected closely with German trade and were menaced with ruin by the war; by the refusal to aid the efforts made to replace necessaries, hitherto supplied by Germany, by the founding or financing of factories for their production at home; by the restrictions put on trade under pretext of the war, that prevented the legitimate expansion of promising branches of industry; by the absence of effort to relieve the stringency of the money market, wealthy merchants being unable to obtain cash to meet their liabilities here, because their English debtors could not transmit the money they owed; some were even obliged to sell the depreciated Government paper at heavy loss in order to maintain their credit; in other cases war bonds were offered to them in lieu of cash for goods supplied. The details have varied in different centres, and the wealthy and independent merchants of Bombay have suffered less than the merchants of Madras, with whose difficulties I am naturally more familiar.

There, added difficulties constantly arise from the favouritism shown by the Presidency Bank to English, as compared with Indian clients, and the absence of Indians from its Directorate, complained of four years. The anxiety felt by the merchants was largely increased by the depreciation of Government power, and apart from the heavy losses of capital incurred when necessity forced holders to sell for cash, an uneasy feeling arose as to the stability of the Government, when its securities fell so low.

Another disturbing cause was alienation during many years of lands and minerals to foreigners the Government looking on with indifference.

The copra and coir industry of the West Coast had passed into German hands; struck away from them by the war, there was danger of its being absorbed by the English; happily the firm of Tata & Sons stepped in and rescued it, and it remains an Indian Irdustry. Ten years ago, the working of the blend known as monazite, an ingredient in munitions, was absorbed

by Germany. Indian mica mines become German property. Undressed hides were exported wholesale to Germany, although Mysore had shown that they could be dressed and tanned better the Indian than in European factories, and only a little encouragement and help were needed to ensure their dressing and tanning, if not also their working here. Instead of that, the undressed hides were brought up by Government at a price fixed by themselves, and were largely exported to be dressed, tanned and worked abroad. The Viceroy speaking in the Supreme Council on September 5th last stated that large orders had been given to "tanners in India" and that experimental work in tanning had yielded results which promised success on a commercial scale; he expressed the hope that after the war the tanning industry would undergo a great expansion for general purposes. But hide merchants are distressed by an order that hides are to be purchased at war prices, the British War Office buying them to provide with leather goods the civilian population in Britain. But what has the War Office to do with providing boots for civilians, and why should India be drained for civil as well as for military purposes ? If the tanning experiments are being carried on with India's money by experts paid by India, and not by British capitalists, then the outcome should be the property of India and enrich the people of the country, not British merchants and manufacturers settled here.

The war has turned the attention of Government to the wisdom of utilising India's immense natural resources, and the Viceroy speaks of organising these resources with "a view to making India more self-contained, and less dependent on the outer world for the supplies of manufactured goods." We heartily endorse this view. This has long been the cry from Indians; for India, with her varieties of soil and climate, can produce all the materials she needs, and with her surplus goods she can, as Phillimore said of her in the 17th century, "with the droppings of her soil feed distant nations." But the East India Company first, the British Government next, and lately exploiting bodies of Imperialist Traders have vehemently insisted that India should supply raw materials, export them for manufacture abroad, and purchase, preferably within the Empire, the

goods manufactured, out of them. As Macaulay pointed out, the marvellous expansion of English industry was contemporaneous with the impoverishment of India. The reversal of this policy by the present Viceroy will earn India's underlying gratitude if he fosters Indian industries and not English industries, in India. A witness before the Industries Commission stated that India should raise products for use outside, that is, as the East India Company put it, become a plantation for the supply of raw materials. The Viceroy must pardon us, if previous experience has made us anxious on this point. We cannot forget that a century ago the traces of iron were found in the Central Province and that nothing was done to extract the metal—England then being the world's shop for iron to her own huge profit, and not desiring a rival. It was left for Tata to seize the apportunity, and his shares of Rs. 30 are now sold at Rs. 1,180. He started a great industry, and Tata's steel is bought so largely that he cannot meet the demand. Had the iron been raised and worked here during these long years, we should not now be dependent on Britain for our machinery, the want of which cripples the efforts to found new industries and to expand old ones, in order to supply the demand caused by the necessary absorption of factories in Great Britain for war work.

The Viceroy remarks truly that previous "efforts were more sporadic than systematic," but proceeds :

"The marked success which has followed the organisation of research and demonstration work in scientific agricultures, and the assistance which has been given to the mineral industries by the Geological Survey are striking examples that encourager a bolder policy on similar lines for the benefit of other and especially the manufacturing industries."

Here, again, we must pause to remark that some of the experiments in scientific agriculture result in efforts to meet the demands of England, rather than those of India. India works short-stapled cotton. Especially in her handloom industry, short-stapled cotton suits her. Lancashire wants long-stapled, and cannot get enough from the United States and Egypt.

Therefore, India should substitute long for short-stapled cotton. We confess we do not see the sequitur. Nor do we find in our study of English trade, that England, which is set up as an example to be copied, has followed self-denying ordinances, and has regulated her production so as to help foreign countries to her own detriment.

However, the war has done for India, in awakening the interest of the Government in her industries, that which the attempts of Indian patriots have failed to do. The war brought about the Industries Commission, and the need for munition has forced industrial organisation for their production. It is for Indian merchants to see, by seizing and utilising the political weapon, that the organisation and encouragement of industries by Government—unless it be a House Government under their own control—does not reduce Indians to a more subordinate position than they now hold. It is this danger which is playing a great part in the fear. The tea industry for instance, is in the hands of English planters, and while incomes drawn from other agricultural profits have been taxed, incomes derived from tea—which is certainly an agricultural profit—have wholly escaped till lately. If this policy be pursued, and the fostering of industries with Indian money places the industries in foreign hands, Indians will, even more than now, be dubashes, and clerks, and other employees of English-captained firms, and will depend even more and more on wages, driven lower and lower by increasing competition.

The industrial prospects in India are by no means discouraging, if Indians exert themselves to hold their own. Mr. Tozer, in his British India and its trade says :

"The cotton and jute manufactures, already conducted on a large scale, offer scope for still further development. Sugar and tabacco are produced in large quantities, but both require the application of the latest scientific processes of cultivation and manufacture. Oil seeds might be crushed in India instead of being exported; while cotton seeds, as yet imperfectly utilised, can be turned to good account. Hides and skins, now largely

exported raw, might be more largely tanned and dressed in India. Again the woollen and silken fabrics manufactured in India are mostly coarse fabrics and there is scope for the production of finer goods. Although railways make their own rolling stock they gave to import wheels and axle, tyres and other iron work. At present steel is manufactured on a very small scale and the number of iron foundries and machine shops, although increasing, is capable of greater expansion. Machinery and machine tools have for the most part to be imported. Millions of agriculturists and artisans use rude tools which might be replied by similar articles that are more durable and of better make. Improved oil presses and handlooms should find a profitable market. Paper-mills and flour-mills might be established in greater numbers. There are openings also for the manufacture of sewing machines, fire-works, rope, boots and shoes, saddlery, harness, clock. watches, aniline and alizarine dyes, electrical appliances, glass and glassware, tea, chests, gloves, rice, starch, matches, lamps, candles, soap, linen, hardware and cutlery.

Obviously, India might be largely self-sufficing, and, as of old, export her surplus. But now her imports are rising, and under the present system her exports do not enrich her as they should.

Imports were steadily rising before the war, but dropped with it. (Amounts given in pounds sterling) :

1911-12	Rs.	92,383,200	Piece-goods	28,592,000
1912-13	,,	07,332,490	Piece-goods	35,536,000
1913-14	,,	122,165,203	Piece-goods	38,758,000
1914-15	,,	91,952,600	Piece-goods	28,643,000
1915-16	,,	87,560,169	Piece-goods	25,175,000

The previous five years also show generally rising imports. (Amounts given in ruples) :

1906-07	Rs.	135,50,85,676
1907-08	,,	162,71,55,234

1908-09	,,	143,89,75,796
1909-10	,,	154,48,36,214
1910-111	,,	169,05,72,729

Exports exceeded imports, and the war has made difficulties in the way of realising payment. (Amounts given in pounds sterling) :

1911-12	Rs.	147,879,060
1912-13	,,	160,800,289
1913-14	,,	162,807,900
1914-15	,,	118,323,300
1915-16	,,	128,356,619

Indian merchants have seen the swift expansion of Japanese trade, and know that it is fostered by the Japanese Government both by protection and with bounties. They have to compete with it in their own land. Is it any wonder that they desire an Indian Government ? They see Japanese goods underselling them and flooding their own markets. Is it any wonder that they desire a Home Government, that will put duties on these foreign goods and protect their own products ?

The furious uprising of the European Associations, ever indifferent to politics which only concerns Indian interests, has shown them that their trade rivals dread the transfer of power, because they fear to lose the unfair privilege and advantages which they have always enjoyed, since the humble traders of the seventeenth century bacame the masters of India. They are not accustomed to a struggle on equal terms, and the prospect dismays them. They want privilege, not justice and a fair field. Much of their fear and anger, the need felt by Sir Hugh Bray for English dominance for the protection of English interests, lie in the fact that they dread the budget of a Home Government, even more than they dread a fair trade competition.

The Indian merchants now realise that, in the trade war after the end of the present war, they will go down unless they have power in their own country, trade, commerce, industry, organised

by the countrymen of the European Chambers of Commerce and Trade Association, mean ruin to the Indian merchants, traders and manufactures. The favouritism of Government and English Banks has spelt hard struggle during the period when organisation was wanting. When it is accompanied by organisation created and ruled bv the foreigners, it will spell ruin, Mr. J.W. Root has rightly observed that to give Great Britain, under present circumstances, the control over Indian foreign trade and internal industry that would be secured by a common tariff would be an unpardonable iniquity...Can it be conceived that were India's fiscal arrangements placed to any considerable extent under the control of British legislators, they would not be regulated with an eye to British interests ? Intense jealousy of India is always cropping up in everything affecting fiscal or industrial legislation.

Indian merchants are fully alive to this danger, and to avert it they are welcoming Home Rule.

The merchants also realise that fiscal autonomy can only come with political autonomy. Only the illogical demand fiscal autonomy and reject Home Rule. A budget framed by an Indian Finance Member would aim at a much incresed expenditure on education, sanitation and irrigation—an expenditure that would result in increased capacity, increased health for the citizens and increased productiveness for the land. Railways would be constructed out of loans raised for the particular project not out of revenue. Administration charges would be reduced by the reduction of salaries and greater economy. They have increased in a decade by Rs. 160 millions.

On the revenue side, the taxation on land would be lightened, so that cultivators might make a decent living by their labour. Exports of Indian monopolies, such as jute and indigo, would be heavily taxed. Imports would be taxed according to India's needs, and heavy duties laid as bounty-fed products. Imported liquors would carry a prohibitory duty, and they were imported in 1910-11 to the value of Rs. 1,89,81,666. Provisions, which were imported to the value of over 3 crores of

rupees, might also be heavily taxed, being a luxury. Sugar rose in five years from 10 crores of rupees to 14 crores, and should be heavily taxed, so as to encourage its growth here. Cotton piece-goods have risen from 37 crores to 41 crores and India should supply herself as well as with silk piece goods, risen from 1-3/4 crores to 2-3/4 crores. Army expenditure at the moment cannot be reduced, but later, territorial armies would be raised and large reserves gradually formed. For a time English troops would remain, as in the South African Union, but the short service system would be abolished, and recruiting charges reduced.

Even so hasty a glance over the economic condition of India makes very plain the reasons for the awakening of Indian Merchants, and their entry into the Home Rule Camp.

(*e*) *The Awakening of the Women*

The position of women in the ancient Aryan civilisation was a very noble one. The great majority married, becoming, as Manu said. the Light of the Home; some took up the ascetic life, remained unmarried, and sought the knowledge of Brahman. The story of the Rani Damayanti, to whom her husband's ministers came when they were troubled by the Raja's gambling; that of Gandhari, in the Council of Kings and warrior chiefs, remonstrating with her headstrong son; in later days, those of Padmini of Chittor, of Mirabai of Marwar the sweet poetess, of Tarabai of Thoda the warrior, of Chand Bibi the defender of Ahmednagar, of Ahalya Bai of Indore the Great Ruler—all these and countless others are well known.

Only in the last five or six generations has the Indian women slipped away from her place at her husband's side, and left him unhelped in his public life. Even now, they wield great influence over husband and son, but lack thorough knowledge to a d. Culture has never forsaken them, but the English education of their husbands and sons, with the neglect of Sanskrit and the Vernacular, have made a barrier between the culture of the husband and that of the wife, and have shut the woman out from

her old sympathy with the lager life of men. While the interests of the husband have widened, those of the wife have narrowed. The materialising of the husband has tended also, by reaction, to render the wife's religion less broad and wise, and by throwing her on the family priest for guidance in religion, instead, as of old, on her husband, has made the religion entirely one of devotion; and lacking the strong stimulus of knowledge, it more easily slides down into superstition, into dependence on forms not understood.

The wish to save their sons from the materialising results of English education awoke keen sympathy among Indian mothers with the movement to make Hinduism an integral part of education. It was, perhaps, the first movement in modern days which aroused among them in all parts of India a keen and living interest.

Then the troubles of Indians outside Indian roused the ever-quick sympathy of Indian women, and the attack in South Africa on the sacredness of Indian marriage drew large numbers of them out of their homes, to protest against the wrong.

The Partition of Bengal was bitterly resented by Bengali women, and was another factor in the outward turning change. When the editor of an extremist newspaper was prosecuted for sedition, convicted and sentenced, 500 Bengali women went to his mother to show their sympathy, not by condolences but by congratulations. Such was the feeling of the well-born women of Bengal. The Indentured Labour question, involving the dishonour of women, again moved them deeply and, even sent a deputation to the Viceroy composed of women.

These were, perhaps, the chief outer causes; but deep in the heart of India's daughters arose the Mother's voice, calling on them to help her to arise and to be once more mistress in her own household, Indian women, nursed on her old literature, with its wonderful ideals of womanly perfection, could not remain indifferent to the great movement for India's liberty. And during the last few years the hidden fire long burning in

their hearts, fire of love to Bharatmata, fire of resentment against the lessened influence of the religion which they passionately love, instinctive dislike of the foreigner as ruling in their land, have caused a marvellous awakening. The strength of the Home Rule movement is rendered tenfold greater by the adhesion to it of large number of women, who bring to its helping the uncalculating heroism, the endurance, the self-sacrifice of the feminine nature. Our League's best recruits and recruiters are among the women of India, and the women of Madras boast that they marched in procession when the men were stopped and that their prayers in the temples set the interned captives free. Home Rules has become so intertwined with religion by the prayers offered up in the great Southern Temples—sacred places of pilgrimage—and spreading from them to village temples, and also by its being preached, up and down the country, by Sadhus and Sannyasis, that it has become in the minds of the women and of the ever-religious masses, inextricably interwined with religion. That is, in this country, the surest way of winning alike the women of the higher classes and the men and women villagers. And that is why I have said that the two words, "Home Rule", have become a Mantram.

(*f*) *The Awakening of the Masses*

This is another startling phenomenon of our times due of late to the teaching of Sadhus and Sannyasis and the campaign of prayer, just mentioned, but much more to the steady influence of the educated classes permeating the masses for very many years, the classes which, as we shall see, have their roots struck deep in the villages. It must be remembered that the raiyat, though innocent of English, has a culture of his own, made up of old traditions and legends and folk-lore, coming down from time immemorial. He is religious, knows the great laws of Karma and Reincarnation, is industrious and shrewd. He cares very little for who is the "Sirkar" and very much for the agents who come to collect his tax or to meddle with his fields. In the old days, which, for him, still live, the Panchayat managed the village affairs, and he was prosperous and contented, save when the King's tax-gatherer came or soldiers harried his village.

These were inevitable natural evils, like drought or flood; and if a raid came or an invasion, they felt they were suffering with their King, and in the tax they were sharing with their King, whereas they are crushed now in an iron machinery, without the human nexus that used to exist.

Home Rule has touched the ryot through his village life, where the present order presses hard upon him in ways that I shall refer to when dealing with agricultural conditions. He resents the rigid payment of tax in money instead of the variable tax in kind, the King's share of the produce. He resents the frequent resettlements, which force him to borrow from the money-lenders to meet the higher claim. He wants the old Panchayat back again; he wants his village should be managed by himself and his fellows, and he wants to get rid of the tyranny of petty officials, who have replaced the old useful communal servants.

We cannot leave out of the causes which have helped to awaken the masses, the influence of the co-operative movement, and the visits paid to villages by educated men for lectures on sanitation, hygiene and other subjects. Messrs. Moreland and Ewing, writing in the Quarterly Review, remarked :

"The change of attitude on the part of the peasant coupled with the progress made in organisation mainly through the co-operative propaganda, is the outstanding achievement of the past decade, and at the same time the chief ground for the recent confidence with which agricultural reformers can now face the future."

In many parts of the country, where conference are carried in the vernacular, the raiyats attend in large numbers, and often take part in the practical discussions on local affairs. They have begun to hope, and to feel that they are a part of the great National Movement, and that for them also a better day is dawning.

The submerged classes have also felt the touch of a ray of

hope, and are lifting up their bowed heads, and claiming with more definiteness, their place in the Household of the Mother. Movements created by themselves, or obtaining in the higher castes, have been stirring in them a sense of self-respect. The Brahmanas, awakening to a sense of their long-neglected duty, have done much to help them, and the prospect of their future brightens year by year.

By a just karma the higher castes are finding that attempts are being made by official and non-official Europeans to stir this class into opposition to Home Rule. They play upon the contempt with which they had been treated, and threaten them with a return of it, if "Brahmana Rule", as they call it, is gained. Twenty years ago and more, I ventured to urge the danger to Hindu Society that was hidden within the neglect of the submerged, and the folly of making it profitable for them to embrace Islam or Christianity, which offered them a higher social status. Much has been done since then, but it is only a drop in the ocean needed. They know very well, of course, that all the castes, not the highest alone, are equally guilty, but that is a sorry comfort. Large numbers of them are, happily, willing to forget the past, and to work with their Indian fellow-countrymen for the future. It is the urgent duty of every lover of the Motherland to draw these, the neglected children, into the common home.

Mr. Gandhi's capital idea of a monster petition for the Congress-League scheme, for which signatures were only to be taken after careful explanation of its scope and meaning, has proved to be an admirable method of political propaganda. The soil in the Madras Presidency had been well prepared by a wide distribution of popular literature and the Propaganda Committee had scattered over the land in the vernaculars a simple explanation of Home Rule. The result of active work in the villages during the last year showed itself in the gathering in less than a month of nearly a million signatures. They have been taken in duplicate, so that we have a record of a huge number of people interested in Home Rule, and the hosts will increase in ever-widening circles, preparing for the coming Freedom.

Why India Demands Home Rule

India demands Home Rule for two reasons : one essential and vital, the other less important but weighty. First, because Freedom is the birth right of every Nation; secondly because her most important interests are now made subservient to the interests of the British Empire without her consent, and her resources are not utilised for her greatest needs. It is enough only to mention the money spent on her Army, not for local defence, but for Imperial purposes, as compared with that spent on primary education.

I. The Vital Reason

(a) What is a Nation

Self-Government is necessary to the self-respect and dignity of a people; other Government emasculates a Nation, lowers its character; and lessens its capacity. The wrongdo ne by the Arms Act, which Raja Rampal Singh voiced in the Second Congress as a wrong which out-weighed all the benefits of British Rule, was its weakening and debasing effect on Indian method. "We cannot, he declared, "be grateful to it for degrading our natures, for systematically crushing out all material spirit, for converting a race of soldiers and heroes into a timid flock of quill-driving sheep". This was not done by the fact that a man did not carry arms—few carry them in England—but that men were deprived of the right to carry them. A Nation, an individual, cannot develop his capacities to the utmost, without Liberty. And this is recognised everywhere except in India. As Muzzini truly said :

"God has written a line of His thought over the cradle of every people. That is its special mission. It cannot be cancelled; it must be freely developed."

For, what is a Nation ? It is a spark of the Divine fire, a fragment of the Divine Life, outbreathed into the world, and gathering round itself a mass of individuals, men, women and children, whom it binds together into one. Its qualities, its powers, in a word, its type, depend on the fragment of the Divine

Life embodied in it, the Life which shapes it, evolves it, colours it and makes it One. The magic of Nationality is the feeling of oneness, and the use of nationality is to serve the world in the particular way for which its type fits it. This is what Mazzini called "its special mission", the duty given to it by God in its birth-hour. Thus India had the duty of spreading the idea of Dharma, Persia that of Purity, Egypt that of Science, Greece that of Beauty, Rome that of Law. But to render its full service to Humanity it must, develop along its own lines, and be Self-determined in its evolution. It must be itself, and not another. The whole world suffers where a Nationality is distorted, or suppressed before its mission to the world is accomplished.

(*b*) *The Cry for Self-Rule*

Hence the cry of a Nation for Freedom, for Self-Rule, is not a cry of mere selfishness demanding more Rights that it may enjoy more happiness. Even in that there is nothing wrong; for happiness means fullness of life, and to enjoy such fullness is a righteous claim. But the demand for Self-Rule is a demand for the evolution of its own nature for the service of humanity. It is a demand of the deepest spirituality, an expression of the longing to give its very best to the world. Hence dangers can not check it, nor threats appeal, nor offerings of greater pleasures lure it to give up its demand for freedom. In the adapted words of a Christian Scripture, it passionately cries : "What shall it profit a Nation if it gain the whole world and lose its own Soul ? What shall a Nation give in Exchange for its Soul ? Better hardship and freedom, than luxury and thraldom. This is the spirit of the Home Rule movement, and therefore it cannot be crushed, it cannot be destroyed, it is eternal and ever young. Nor can it be persuaded to exchange its birthright for any mass of efficiency pottage at the hands of the bureaucracy.

(*c*) *Stunting the Race*

Coming closer to the daily life of the people as individuals, we see that the character of each men, women and child is degraded and weakened by a foreign admintisration, and this is

most,keenly felt by the best Indians. Speaking on the employment of Indians in the Public Services, Gopal Krishna Gokhale said :

"A kind of dwarfing or stunting of the Indian race is going on under the present system. We must live all the days of our life in an atmosphere of inferiority and the tallest of us must bend, in order that the exigencies of the system may be satisfied. The upward impulse, if I may use such an expression, which every school boy at Eton or Harrow may feel, that he may one day be a Gladstone, a Nelson, or a Washington, and which may draw forth the best efforts of which he is capable, that is denied to us. The full height to which our manhood is capable of rising can never be reached by us under the present system. The moral elevation which every self-governing people feel cannot be felt by us. Our administrative and military talents must gradually disappear owing to sheer disuse, till at last our lot, as hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own country, is stereotyped."

The Hon. Mr. Bhupendranath Basu has spoken on similar lines :

"A bureaucratic administration, conducted by an imported agency, and centering all power in its hands, and undertaking all responsibility, has acted as a dead weight on the Soul of India, stifling in us all sense of initiative, for the lack of which we are condemned, atrophying the nerves of action and, what is most serious, necessarily dwarfing in us all feeling of self-respect."

In this connection the warning of Lord Salisbury to Cooper's Hill students is significant :

"No systsm of Government can be permanently safe where there is a feeling of inferiority or of mortification affecting the relations between the governing and the governed. There is nothing I would more earnestly wish to impress upon all who leave this country for the purpose of governing India than that, if they choose to be so, they are the only enemies England has to fear. They are the persons who can, if they will, deal a blow of the deadliest character at the future rule of England."

I have ventured to urge this danger, which has increased of late years, in consequence of the growing self-respect of the Indians. But the ostrich policy is thought to be preferable in many parts of the country.

This stunting of the race begins with the education of the child. The schools differentiate between the British and Indian teachers; the Colleges do the same. The students see first class Indians superseded by young and third-rate foreigners; the Principal of a College should be a foreigner; foreign history is more important than Indian; to have written on English villages is a qualification for teaching economics in India, the whole atmosphere of the School and College emphasise the superiority of the foreigner, even when the professors abstain from open assertion thereof.

The Education Department controls the education given, and it is planned on foreign models, and its object is to serve foreign rather than native ends, to make docile Government servants rather than patriotic citizens; high spirits, courage, self-respect, are not encouraged, and docility is regarded as the most precious quality in the student; pride in country, patriotism and ambition are looked on as dangerous, and English, instead of Indian, ideals are exalted; the blessings of a foreign rule and the incapacity of Indians to manage their own affairs constantly inculcated. What wonder that boys trained often turn out, as men, time servers and sycophants, and, finding their legitimate ambitions frustrated, become selfish and care little for the public weal? Their own inferiority has been so driven into them during their most impressionable years that they do not even feel what Mr. Asquith called the "intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke."

(*b*) *India's Rights*

It is not a question whether the rule is good or bad, German efficiency in Germany is far greater than English efficiency in England; the Germans were better fed, had more amusements and leisure, less crushing poverty than the English. But would any Englishman therefore desire to see Germans occupying all the highest positions in England ? Why not ? Because the right-

eous self-respect and dignity of the free man revolt against foreign domination, however superior. As Mr. Asquith said at the beginning of the War, such a condition was "inconceivable and would be intolerable". Why then is it the one conceivable system here in India ? Why is it not felt by all Indians to be intolerable ? It is because it has become a habit, bred in us from childhood, to regard the saheb-lok as our natural superiors, and the greatest injury British rule has done to Indians is to deprive them of the natural instinct born in all free people, the feeling of an inherent right to self-determination, to be themselves. Indian dress, Indian food, Indian ways, Indian customs are all looked on as second rate; Indian mother-tongue and Indian literature cannot make an educated man. Indians as well as Englishmen take it for granted that the natural rights of every Nation do not belong to them; they claim "a larger share in the government of the country," instead of claiming the government of their own country, and they are expected to feel grateful for "boons", for concessions. Britain is to say what she will give. The whole thing is wrong, topsy-turvy, irrational. Thank God that India's eyes are opening; that myriads of her people realise that they are men, with a man's right to freedom in his own country, a man's right to manage his own affairs. India is no longer on her knees for boons; she is on her feet for Rights. It is because I have taught this, that the English in India misunderstand me, and call me seditious; it is because I have taught this, that I am President of this Congress today.

This may seem strong language, because the plain truth is not usually put in India. But this is what every Briton feels in Britain for his own country, and what every Indian should feel in India for his. This is the Freedom for which the Allies are fighting; this is Democracy, the Spirit of the Age. And this is what every true Briton will feel is India's right, the moment India claims it for herself, as she is claiming it now. When this Right is gained, then will the tie between India and Great Britain become a golden link of mutual love and service, and the iron chain of a foreign yoke will fall away. We shall live and work side by side with no sense of distrust and dislike, working as brothers for common ends. And from that union shall arise the mightiest Empire, or

rather Commonwealth, that the world has ever known, a Commonwealth that, in God's good time, shall put an end to war.

II. The Secondary Reasons
(a) Tests of Efficiency

The secondary reasons for the present demand for Home Rule may be summed up in the blunt statement : "The present rule, while efficient in less important matters and in those which concern British interests, is inefficient in the greater matters on which the healthy life and happiness of the people depend." Looking at outer things, such as external order, posts and telegraphs—except where political agitators are concerned—main roads, railways, etc., foreign visitors, who expected to find a semi-savage country, hold up their hands in admiration. But if they saw the life of the people, the masses of struggling clerks trying to educate their children on Rs. 25 (28s. 0·1/4d.) a month, the masses of labourers with one meal a day, and the huts in which they live, they would find cause for thought. And if the educated men talked freely with them they would be surprised at their bitterness. Gopal Krishna Gokhale put the whole matter very plainly in 1911.

One of the fundamental conditions of the peculiar position of the British Government in this country is that it should be a continuously progressive Government. I think all thinking men to whatever community they belong, will accept that. Now, I suggest four tests to judge whether the Government is progressive, and further whether it is continuously progressive. The first test that I would apply is what measures it adopts for the moral and material improvement of the mass of the people, and under these measures I do not include those appliances of modern Governments which the British Government has applied in this country, because they were appliances necessary for its very existence, though they have benefited the people, such as the construction of Railways, the introduction of Post and Telegraph, and things of that kind. By measures for the moral and the material improvement of the people. I mean what the Government does for education, what the Government does for sanitation, what the Government does for agricultural development, and so forth. That is my first test. The second test that

I would apply is what steps the Government takes to give us a larger share in the administration of our local affairs—in municipalities and local boards. My third test is what voice the Government gives us in its Councils—in those deliberative assemblies, where policies are considered. And, lastly, we must consider how far Indians are admitted into the ranks of the public service.

(b) *A Change of System Needed—Officials*

Those were Gokhale's tests, and Indians can supply the results of their knowledge and experience to answer them. But before dealing with the failure to meet these tests, it is necessary to state here that it is not a question of blaming men, or of substituting Indians for Englishmen, but of changing the system itself. It is a common place that the best men become corrupted by the possession of irresponsible power. As Bernard Houghton says: "The possession of unchecked power corrupts some of the finer qualities." Officials quite honestly come to believe that those who try to change the system are undermining the security of the State. They identify the State with themselves, so that criticism of them is seen as treason to the State. The phenomenon is well known in history, and it is only respecting itself in India. The same writer—I prefer to use his words rather than my own, for he expresses exactly my own views, and will not be considered to be prejudiced as I am thought to be—cogently remarks:

"He (the official) has become an expert in reports and returns and matters of routine through many years of practice. They are the very woof and warp of his brain. He has no ideas, only reflexes. He views with acrid disfavour untried conceptions. From being constantly pre-occupied with the manipulation of the machine he regards its smooth working, the ordered and harmonious regulation of glittering pieces of machinery, as the highest service he can render to the country of his adoption. He determines that his particular cog-wheel at least shall be bright, smooth, silent, and with absolutely no back-lash. Not naturally in course of time he comes to envisage the world through the strait embrasure of an office window. When perforce he must

report on new proposals he will place in the forefront, not their influence on the life and progress of the people, but their convenience to the official hierarchy and the manner in which they affect its authority. Like the monks of old, or the squire in the typical English village, he cherised a benevolent interest in the commonalty, and is quite willing, even eager, to take a general interest in their welfare, if only they do not display initiative or assert themselves in opposition to himself or his order. There is much in this proviso. Having come to regard his own judgment as almost divine, and the hierarchy of which he has the honour to form a part as a sacrosanct institution, he tolerates the laity so long as they labour quietly and peaceably at their vacations and do not presume to intermeddle in high matter of State. That is the heinous offence. And frank criticism of official acts touches a lower depth still, even *lese majeste*. For no official will endure criticism from his subordinates, and the public, who lie in outer darkness beyond the pale, do not in his estimation rank even with his subordinates.

How, then, should he listen with patience when in their cavilling way they insinuate that, in spite of the labours of a high souled bureaucracy, all is perphaps notf or the best in the best of all possible words—still less when they suggest reforms that had never occurred even to him or to his order, and may clash with his most cherished ideals ? It is for the officials to govern the country; they alone have been initiated into the sacred mysteries; they alone understand the sacred working of the machine. At the utmost the laity may tender respectful and humble suggestions for their consideration. but no more. As for those who dare to think and act for themselves, their ignorant folly is only equalled by their arrogance. It is as though a handful of school boys were to dictate to their masters alterations in the traditional time-table, or to insist on a modified curriculum......These worthy people (officials) confuse manly independence with disloyalty; they cannot conceive of natives except either as rebels or as timid sheep.

Other quotation on the effect of bureaucracy will be found in Appendix I.

(c) *Non-Official Anglo-Indians*

The problem becomes more complicated by the existence in India of a small but powerful body of the same race as the higher officials; there are only 122,919 English-born persons in this country, while there are 255,000,000 in the British Raj and another 70,000,000 in the Indian Stales, more or less affected by British influence. As a rule, the non-officials do not take any part in politics, being otherwise occupied; but they enter the field when any hope arises in Indian hearts of changes really beneficial to the Nation. John Stuart Mill observed on this point.

"The individuals of the ruling people who resort to the foreign country to make their fortunes are of all others those who most need to be held under powerful restraint. There are always one of the chief difficulties of the Government. Armed with the prestige and filled with the scornful overbearingness of the conquering Nation, they have the feelings inspired by absolute power without its sense of responsibility."

Similarly, Sir John Lawrence wrote :

"The difficulty in the way of the Government of India acting fairly in these matters is immense. If anything is done, or attampted to be done, to help the natives, a general howl is raised, which reverberates in England, and finds sympathy and support there. I feel quite bewildered sometimes what to do. Everyone is, in the abstract, for justice, moderation and such like excellent qualities; but when one comes to apply such principles so as to affect anybody's interests, then a change comes over them."

Keene, speaking of the principle of treating equally all classes of the community, says :

"The application of that maxim, however, could not be made without sometimes provoking opposition among the handful of white settlers in India who, even when not connected with the administration, claimed a kind of class ascendency which was not only in the conditions of the country but also in the nature

of the case. It was perhaps natural that in a land of caste the compatriots of the rulers should become—as Lord Lytton said a kind of "White Brahmans", and it was certain that, as a matter of fact, the pride of race and the possession of Western civilisation created a sense of superiority, the display of which was ungraceful and even dangerous, when not tempered by official responsibility. This feeling had been sensitive enough in the days of Lord William Bentinck, when the class referred to was small in numbers and devoid of influence. It was now both more numerous, and—by reason of its connection with the newspapers of Calcutta and of London—it was far better able to make its passion heard."

During Lord Ripon's sympathetic administration the great outburst occurred against the Ilbert Bill in 1883. We are face to face with a similar phenomenon today, when we see the European Associations—under the leadership of the *Madras Mail*, the *Englishman* of Calcutta, the *Pioneer* of Allahabad, the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, with their Tory and Unionist allies in the London press and with the aid of retired Indian officials and non-officials in England—desperately resisting the Reforms now proposed. Their opposition, we know, is a danger to the movement towards Freedom, and even when they have failed to impress England—as they are evidently failing—they will try to minimise or smother here the reforms which a statute has embodied. The Minto-Morley reforms were thus robbed of their usefulness, and a similar attempt, if not guarded against, will be made when the Congress-League Scheme is used as the basis for an Act.

(*d*) *The Reaction on England*

We cannot leave out of account here the deadly harm done to England herself by this un-English system of rule in India. Mr. Hobson has pointed out.

"As our free self-governing colonies have furnished hope, encouragement, and leading to the popular aspirations in Great Britain, not merely by practical success in the art of self-govern-

ment, but by the wafting of a spirit of freedom and equality, so our despotically ruled dependencies have ever served to damage the character of our people by feeding the habits of snobbish subservience, the admiration of wealth and rank, the corrupt survivals of the inequalities of feudalism..." Cobden writing in 1860 of our Indian Empire, put this pithy question : "Is it not just possible that we may become corrupted at home by the reaction of arbitrary political maxims in the East upon our domestic politics, just as Greece and Rome were demoralised by their contact with Asia ?" Not merely is the reaction possible, it is inevitable. As the despotic portion of our Empire has grown in area, a large number of men, trained in the temper and methods of autocracy, as soldiers and civil officials in our Crown Colonies, Protectorates and Indian Empire, reinforced by numbers of merchants, planters, engineers and overseers, whose lives have been those of a superior caste living an artificial life removed from all the healthy restraints of ordinary European Society, have returned to this country, bringing back the characters, sentiments and ideas imposed by this foreign environment.

It is a little hard on the I.C.S., that they should be foreigners here and then, when they returned to their native land, find that they have become foreigners there by the corrupting influences with which they are surrounded here. We import them as raw material to our own disadvantage, and when we export them as manufactured here, Great Britain and India alike suffer from their reactionary tendencies. The results are unsatisfactory to both sides.

(*e*) *The First Test Applied*

Let us now apply Gokhale's first test. What has the Bureaucracy done for "education, sanitation, agricultural improvement, and so forth" ? I must put the facts very briefly, but they are indisputable.

EDUCATION—The percentage of the whole population of children receiving education is 2.8, the percentage having risen by 0.9 since Mr. Gokhale moved his Education Bill six years

ago. But even this percentage is illusory. It is recognised by educationists that children taught for less than four years lose what they had learned during that time. In the Educational Statistics (British India) for 1914-15, we find that 6,333,968 boys and 1,128,363 girls were under instruction, 7,462,031 children in all. Of these 5,434,576 had not passed the Lower Primary stage, and of these 1,680,561 could not even read. If these be deducted from the total, we have only 2,027,455 children receiving education useful to them, giving us the appalling figure of ·83 per cent. The money spent of the 5-1/2 millions might as well be thrown into the Bay of Bengal. The percentage of children of school-going age attending school was 20.4 at the end of 1915. In 1913, the Government of India put the number of pupils at 4-1/2 millions; this has been accomplished in 59 years, reckoning from Sir Charles Wood's Educational Despatch in 1854, which led to the formation of the Education Department. In 1870, an Education Act was passed in Great Britain, the condition of education in England then much resembling our present position; grants-in-aid in England had been given since 1833, chiefly to Church Schools. Between 1870 and 1881 free and compulsory education was established, and in 12 years the attendance rose from 43.3 to nearly 100 per cent. There are now 6,000,000 children in the schools of England and Wales out of a population of 40 millions. Japan, before 1872, had a proportion of 28 per cent, of children of school-going are in school, nearly 8 over our present proportion; in 24 years the percentage was raised to 92, and in 28 years education was free and compulsory. In Baroda, education is free and largely compulsory and the percentage of boys is 100 per cent. Travancore has 81.1 per cent, of boys and 33.2 of girls. Mysore has 45.8 of boys and 9.7 of girls. Baroda spends as 6 6 annas per head on school-going children, British India annas three. Expenditure on education advanced between 1882 and 1907 by 57 lakhs. Land revenue had increased by 8 crores, military expenditure by 13 crores, civil by 8 crores, and capital outlay on Railway was 15 crores. (I am quoting G.K. Gokhale's figures.) He ironically calculated that if the population did not increase, every boy would be in school 115 years hence, and every girl in 665 years. Brother-delegates, we hope

to do it more quickly under Home Rule. I submit that in Education the Bureaucracy is inefficient.

SANITATION AND MEDCIAL RELIEF—The prevalence of plague, cholera, and above all malaria, shew the lack of sanitation alike in town and country. This lack is one of the causes contributing to the low average of life-period in India—23 5 years. In England the life-period is 40 years, in New Zealand 60. The chief difficulty in the way of the treatment of disease is the encouragement of the foreign system of medicine, especially in rural parts, and the withholding of grants from the indigenous Government Hospitals, Government Dispensaries, Government doctors must all be on the foreign system. Ayurvedic and Unani medicines, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Physicians are unrecognised, and to "cover" the latter is "infamous" conduct. Travancore gives grants-in-aid to 72 Vaidyashalas, at which 1,43,505 patients—22,000 more than in allopathic institutions were treated in 1914-15. (The report issued in 1917). Our Government cannot grapple with the medical needs of the people, yet will not allow the people's money to be spent on the systems they prefer. Under Home Rule, the indigenous and the foreign systems will be treated with impartiality. I grant that the allopathic doctors do their utmost to supply the need, and show great self-sacrifice, but the need is too vast and their numbers too few. Efficiency on their own lines in this matter is therefore impossible for our bureaucratic Government; their fault lies in excluding the indigenous systems, which they have not condescended to examine before rejecting them. The result is that in sanitation and medical relief, the Bureaucracy is inefficient.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT—The census of 1911 gives the agricultural population at 218.3 millions. Its frightful poverty is a matter of common knowledge; its ever-increasing load of indebtedness has been dwelt on for at least the last 30 odd years by Sir Dinshaw E. Wacha. Yet the increasing debt is accompanied with increasing taxation, land revenue having risen, as just stated, in 25 years, by 8 crores—80,000,000 of rupees. In addition to this there are local cesses, salt tax, etc. The salt tax which presses most hardly on the very poor,

was raised in the last budget by Rs. 9 millions. The inevitable result of this poverty is malnutrition, resulting in low vitality, lack of resistance to disease, short life-period, huge infantile mortality. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, no mischievous agitator, repeated in 1905 the figures often quoted :

"Forty millions of people, according to one great Anglo-Indian authority—Sir William Hunter—pass through life with only one meal a day. According to another authority—Sir Charles Elliot—70 millions of people in India do not know what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied even once in the whole course of the year. The poverty of the people of India, thus considered by itself, is truly appalling. And if this is the state of things after a hundred years of your rule, you cannot claim that your principal aim in India has been the promotion of the interests of the Indian people."

It is sometimes said : "Why harp on these figures ? We know them". Our answer is that the fact is ever harping in the stomach of the people, and while it continues, we cannot cease to draw attention to it. And Gokhale urged that "even this deplorable condition has been further deteriorating steadily". We have no figures on malnutrition among the peasantry but in Madras City, among an equally poor urban population, we found that 78 per cent of our pupils were reported, after a medical inspection, to be suffering from malnutrition. And the spareness of frame, the thickness of arms and legs, the pitiably weak grip on life, speak without words to the seeing eye. It needs an extraordinary lack of imagination not to suffer while these things are going on.

The peasant's grievances are many and have been voiced year after year by this Congress. The Forest Laws, made by legislators inappreciative of village difficulties press hardly on them, and only in a small number of places have Forest Panchayats been established. In the few cases in which the experiment has been made, the results have been good, in some cases marvellously good. The paucity of grazing grounds for their cattle, the lack of green manure to feed their impoverished

A similar phenomenon has resulted here from a similar cause, but on a far more widespread scale. And here, a novel and portentous change for India, "a considerable landless class is developing, which involves economic danger," as the Imperial Gazetteer remarks, comparing the census returns of 1891 and 1901. "The ordinary agricultural labourers are employed on the land only during the busy seasons of the year, and in slack times a few are attracted to large trade-centres for temporary work." One recalls the influx into England of Irish labourers at harvest time. Professor Radhakamal Mukerji has laid stress on the older conditions of village life; he says :

"The village is still almost self-sufficing and is in itself an economic unit. The village agriculturist grows all the food necessary for the inhabitants of the village. The smith makes the ploughshares for the cultivator, and the few iron utensils required for the household. He supplies these to the people but does not get money in return. He is recompensed by mutual services from his fellow villagers. The potter supplies him with pots, the weaver with cloth and the oilman with oil. From the cultivator each of these artisans receives his traditional share of grain. Thus almost all the economic transactions are carried on without the use of money. To the villagers money is only a store of value, not a medium of exchange. When they happen to be rich in money, they hoard it either in in coins or make ornaments made of gold and silver.

These conditions are changing in consequence of the pressure of poverty driving the villagers to the city, where they learn to substitute the competition of the town for the mutual helpfulness of the village. The difference of feeling, the change from trustfulness to suspicion, may be seen by visiting villages which are in the vicinity of a town and comparing their villagers with those who inhabit villages in purely rural areas. This economic and moral deterioration can only be checked by the re-establishment of a healthy and interesting village life, and this depends upon the re-establishment of the Panchayat as the unit of government, a question which I deal with presently. Village industries would then revive and an intercommunicating

network would be formed by Co-operative Societies. Mr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar says in his pamphlet, Co-operative Societies and Panchayats :

"The one method by which this evil (emigration to towns) can be arrested and the economic and social standards of life of the rural people elevated is by the inauguration of healthy Panchayats in conjunction with the foundation of co-operative institutions, which will have the effect of resuscitating village industries and of creating organised social forces. The Indian village, when rightly reconstructed, would be an excellent foundation for well-developed co-operative industrial organisation."

Again :

"The resuscitation of the village system has other bearings, not usually considered in connection with the general subject of the inauguration of the Panchayat system. One of the most important of these is the regeneration of the small industries of the land. Both in Europe and in India the decline of small industries has gone on *pari passu* with the decline of forming on a small scale. In countries like France agriculture has largely supported village industries, and small cultivators in that country have turned their attention to industry as a supplementary source of livelihood. The decline of village life in India is not only a political, but also an economic and industrial problem. Whereas in Europe the cultural impulse has travelled from the city to the village, in India the reverse has been the case. The centre of social life in this country is the village, and not the town. Ours was essentially the cottage industry and our artisans still work in their own huts, more or less out of touch with the commercial world. Throughout the world the tendency has been of late to lay considerable emphasis on distributive and industrial co-operation based on a system of village industries and enterprise. Herein would be found the origins of the arts and crafts guilds and the garden cities, the idea underlying all these being to inaugurate a reign of Socialism and Co-operation, cradicating the entirely unequal distribution of wealth amongst producers and consumers. India has always been a

country of small tenantry, and has thereby escaped many of the evils the western nations have experienced owing to the concentration of wealth in a few hands. The communistic sense in our midst, and the fundamental tenets of our family life have checked such concentration of capital. This has been the cause for the non-development of factory industries on a large scale.

The need for these changes—to which England is returning, after full experience of the miseries of life in manufacturing towns—is pressing.

Addressing an English audience, G.K. Gokhale summed up the general state of India as follows :

Your average annual income has been estimated at about £42 per head. Ours, according to official estimates, is about £2 per head, and according to non-official estimates, only a little more than £1 per head. Your imports per head are about £13; ours about 5s per head. The total deposits in your Postal Savings Bank amount to 148 million sterling, and you have in addition in the Trustees' Savings Banks about 52 million sterling. Our Postal Savings Bank deposits, with a population seven times as large as yours, are only about 7 million sterling, and even of this a little over one-tenth is held by Europeans. Your total paid-up capital of joint-stock companies is about 1,900 million sterling. Ours is not quite 26 million sterling and the greater part of this again is European. Four-fifths of our people are dependent upon agriculture, and agriculure has been for some time steadily deteriorating. Indian agriculturists are too poor, and are, moreover, too heavily indebted, to be able to apply any capital to land, and the result is that over the greater part of India agriculture is, as Sir James Caird pointed out, more than twenty-five years ago, only a process of exhaustion of the soil. The yield per acre is steadily diminishing, being now only about 8 to 9 bushels an acre against about 30 bushels here in England.

In all the matters which come under Gokhale's first test, the Bureaucracy has been and is inefficient.

(f) Give Indians a Chance

All we say in the matter is: You have not succeeded in bringing education, health, and prosperity to the masses of the people. Is it not time to give Indians a chance of doing, for their own country, work similar to that which Japan and other Nations have done for theirs? Surely the claim is not unreasonable. If the Anglo-Indians say that the masses are their peculiar trust and that the educated classes care not for them, but only for place and power, then we point to the Congress, to the speeches and the resolutions eloquent of their love and their knowledge. It is not their fault that they gaze on their country's poverty in helpless despair. Or let Mr. Justice Rahim answer:

"As for the representation of the interests of the many scores of millions in India, if the claim be that they are better represented by European officials than by educated Indian Officials or non-officials, it is difficult to conceive how such reckless claim has come to be urged. The inability of English Officials to master the spoken languages of India, and their habits of life and modes of thought so completely divide them from the general population, that only an extremely limited few, possessed with extraordinary powers of insight, have ever been able to surmount the barriers. With the educated Indians, on the other hand, this knowledge is instinctive, and the view of religion and custom, so strong in the East, make their knowledge and sympathy more real than is to be seen in countries dominated by materialistic conceptions.

And it must be remembered that it is not lack of ability which has brought about bureaucratic inefficiency, for British traders and producers have done uncommonly well for themselves in India. But a Bureaucracy does not trouble itself about matters of this kind, the Russian Bureaucracy did not concern itself with the happiness of the Russian masses, but with their obedience and their paying of taxes. Bureaucracies are the same everywhere, and therefore it is the system we wage war upon, not the men; we do not want to substitute Indian bureaucrats

for British bureaucrats; we want to abolish Bureaucracy, Government by Civil Servants.

(g) *The Other Tests Applied*

I need not delay over the second, third and fourth tests, for the answers *sautent aux yeux.*

The second test, Local Self-Government : Under Lord Mayo (1869-72) some attempts were made at decentralisation, called by Keene "Home Rule" and his policy was followed, on non-financial lines, as well by Lord Ripon, who tried to infuse into what Keene calls "the germs of Home Rule," "the breath of life". Now in 1917, and experimental and limited measure of local Home Rule is to be tried in Bengal. Though the Report of the Decentralisation Committee was published in 1909, we have not yet arrived at the universal election of non-official Chairmen. Decidedly inefficient is the Bureaucracy under test two.

The third test, a Voice in the Councils : The part played by Indian elected members in the Legislative Council, Madras, was lately described by a member as "a farce". The Supreme Legislative Council was called by one of its members a "glorified Debating Society". A table of resolutions proposed by Indian elected members, and passed or lost, was lately drawn up, justified the caustic epithets. With regard to the Minto-Morely reforms, the bureaucracy showed great efficiency in destroying the benefits intended by the parliamentary statute. But the third test shows that in giving Indians a fair voice in the Councils, the Bureaucracy was inefficient.

The fourth test, the Admission of Indians to the Public Services : This is shown, by the Report of the Commission, not to need any destructive activity on the part of the Bureaucracy to prove their unwillingness to pass it, for the Report protects them in their privileged position.

We may add to Gokhale's tests one more which will be triumphantly passed, the success of the Bureaucracy in increasing

the cost of administration. The estimates for the revenue of the present year stand at £86,199,600 sterling. The expenditure is reckoned at £85,572,100 sterling. The cost of administration stands at more than half the total revenue :

Civil Departments Salaries and Expenses	£19,323,300
Miscellaneous Charges	£5,283,300
Military Services	£23,165,900
	£47,772,500

The reduction of the abnormal cost of government in India is of the most pressing nature, but this will never be done until we win Home Rule.

It will be seen that the secondary reasons for the demand for Home Rule are of the weightiest nature in themselves, and show the necessity for its grant if India is to escape from a poverty which threatens to lead a National bankruptcy, as if it has already led to a short life-period and a high death rate, to widespread disease, and to a growing exhaustion of the soil. That some radical change must be brought about in the condition of our masses, if a Revolution of Hunger is to be averted, is patent to all students of history, who also know the poverty of the Indian masses today. This economic condition is due to many causes, of which the inevitable lack of understanding by an alien Government is only one A system of Government suitable to the West was forced on the East, destroying its own democratic and communal institutions, and imposing bureaucratic methods which bewildered and deteriorated a people to whom they were strange and repellent. The result is not a matter for recrimination, but for change. An inappropriate system, forced on an already highly civilised people was bound to fail. It has been rightly said that the poor only revolt, when the misery they are enduring is greater than the dangers of revolt. We need Home Rule to stop the daily suffering of our millions from the diminishing yield of the soil and the decay of village industries.

Administrative Reforms

These fall under the heads of :

(1) Reforms in the Government of India.
(2) Reforms in the Governments of Provinces.
(3) Reforms in Local Self-Government.

I prefer to take these in reverse order, building up the scheme of Government from its foundation, so that it may appear as a coherent whole, its parts interdependent. But I will say at the outset, to preclude mistake, that no scheme of Local Self-Government can succeed, unless the changes asked for last year in the Congress-League scheme are granted. That scheme is our irreducible minimum for Reforms worthy of the name. The long and futile tinkering at Local Self-Government since the days of Lord Ripon has conclusively proved that you can no more have a reality of local Self-Government with unrepresentative Provincial Legislative Councils, or with such Councils as we have now—save in Bengal—with an official and nominated majority of members, with a complete British Executive, or four to one British majority—Executive, in which the solitary Indian member lends cover to objectionable measures which he is powerless to prevent, than you could have a healthy body with a disease of undeveloped brain. Healthy brain directing and controlling, must go with a healthy body.

A foreign Executive, distrustful of Indian capacity to govern, busies itself more with official checks and controls them with the powers of the local membership. We are tired of this grandmotherly legislation. If the Anglo-Indians think us babies—very well. Let the babies crawl by themselves, get up and try to walk and then tumble down, until by tumbles they learn equilibrium. If they learn to walk in leading strings they will always develop bow-legs. But let me remark, in passing, that wherever the Indians have been tried fairly, they have always succeeded. If the Government of India and Great Britain, under official pressure, begin with Local Self-Government, and demand success in that department—or in any departments before they agree to the Congress—League scheme, at last—it means that they are marking time and are not making any real

step forward. And let me say to the Government of India and Britain, with all frankness and good-will, that India is demanding her Rights, and is not begging for concessions. It is for her to say with what she will be satisfied—I appeal to the statement of the Premier of Great Britain, in support of my assertion—and not for any other authority to say to her : "Thus far, and no further." In this attitude, the Democracy of Great Britain supports us; the Allies, fighting, as Mr. Asquith said, "for nothing short of freedom" support us; the great Republic of the United States of America supports us. Britain cannot deny her own traditions, contradict her own leading statesmen, and shame the free Commonwealth, of which she is the glorious Head in the face of the world."

Unfit for Democracy

We have been assured time after time, even to weariness, that India is totally unfit for democratic institutions, having always lived under absolute rule of sorts. But that is not the opinion of historians, based on facts, though it may be the opinion of the Indian Civil Service, based on prejudices. As well said in the Address presented to H.E. the Viceroy and the Rt. Hon. Mr. Montagu by the Home Rule Leagues :

' The argument that Democracy is foreign to India cannot be alleged by any well-informed person. Maine and other historians recognise the fact that Democratic Institutions are essentially Aryan, and spread from India to Europe with the immigration of Aryan peoples. Panchayats, the "village republics," had been the most stable institution of India, and only vanished during the last century under the pressure of the East India Company's domination. They will exist within the castes, each caste forming within itself a thorough democracy, in which the same man may have as relations between a prince and a peasant. Social rank does not depend so much on wealth and titles, as on learning and occupation. India is democratic in spirit, and in institutions left to her from the past and under her control in the present."

We have further the testimony of eminent Englishmen.

Sir John Lawrence said so long ago as 1864 :

"The people of India are quite capable of administering their own affairs, and the municipal feeling is deeply rooted in them. The village communities, each of which is a little republic, are the most abiding of Indian institutions. Holding the position we do in India, every view of duty and policy should induce us to leave as much as possible of the business of the country to be done by the people."

Sir Bartle Frere in 1871, wrote :

"Any one who has watched the working of Indian society will see that its genius is one to represent, not merely by election under Reform Acts but represent generally by provisions, every class of the community, and when there is any difficulty respecting any matter to be laid before Government, it should be discussed among themselves. When there is any fellow-citizen to be rewarded or punished, there is always a caste meeting, and this is an expression, it seems to me, of the genius of the people, as it was of the old Saxons ! to gather together in assemblies of different types to vote by tribes or hundred.

As Mr. Chisholm Anstey said :

We are apt to forget in this country, when we talk of preparing people in the East by education, and all that sort of thing, for Municipal Government and Parliamentary Government (if I may use such a term), that the East is the parent of Municipalities. Local Self-Government, in the widest acceptation of the term, is as old as the East itself. No matter what may be the religion of the people who inhabit what we call the East, there is not a portion of the country from west to east, from north to south, which is not swarming with municipalities, and not only so, but like our municipalities of old, they are all bound together as in a species of network, so that you have ready-made to your hand the framework of a great system or representation."

I might multiply these quotations, but to what and the wise

know them; otherwise they will not accept them, never so forcefully.

With these prefatory remarks, I proceed to consider the reforms in Local Self-Government.

(*a*) *General Principles*

We have three extending areas to consider : (1) the village; (2) the group of villages, each separated from others by larger or smaller spaces of land; this group plus the intervening lands forms the second area of control; (3) the District consisting of coterminous Taluqas or Tahsils, for the most part, but also of tracts of waste and forest lands owned by the Government.

There is an interesting reminiscence in this of the ancient grouping; there was a headman over a village; a higher grade of headman over a group of ten villages; a higher yet over one hundred villages, and so on in multiples of ten. The ancient liked this regular ascending scale, they liked to see orderly theories.

In the village, the electorate should be its resident householders, whether owners or occupiers, "that which concerns all may be judged by all." This gives to the man or woman resident a voice in the country, but the direct power is limited to electing representatives to deal with the questions immediately affecting the voter, while indirectly he reaches up through the higher grades to the geverning of the whole country. Later, as education and experience spread, universal suffrage will elect our Legislative Council, supreme and local. We take a leaf from England's book, and do not at first give the direct suffrage to the labourers except for the local Council. We make the electorate for the Provincial Legislative Council coterminous with the electorate of Taluqa Boards.

We then distribute duties and powers on the principle that whatever belongs to the village exclusively should be controlled by the village Council, while where a village institution is a fragment of a larger whole, the whole should be planned by the

Council in the area of whose authority the whole exists, and the village fragment be assigned to it by the higher Council to whom the village Council should be responsible for its management of its own fragment. Let us take a school as illustration and suppose that the educational scheme for the Province should be planned out by the Education Department of the Provincial Government, and sanctioned by the Provincial Council, it would include, Provincial University or Universities, Colleges, High Schools, Secondary Schools, Primary Schools, each with its manual training institute of similar grade attached to it, and these having divisions for general manual training, and the closer instructions of the workshops for those learning a trade as a means of livelihood. Every village would have its Elementary School, with the workshops needed in that particular village for the trades practised therein; probably there would be a Secondary School in every Firka (Revenue Circle); at least one High School in every Taluqa, and in most Taluqas more than one; a College, or more, in each District; one or more Universities for the Province. But the Village Panchayat would be responsible only for its own Elementary School, and for seeing that any promising boy or girl should be seen on the Firka Secondary School. By this the School would be linked on to the larger life beyond the Village; but its own control would be only over its own School, seeing that its share of the Provincial Education was carried out.

(*b*) *The Panchayat*

The existence of Village Communities in India from time immemorial with a considerable amount of organisation, is a matter of common knowledge, and in some parts of the country many inscriptions and records have been discovered which enable us to reconstruct the village life which continued in the south of India to the last century, and in Burma to our own time. It received its death blow by Sir Thomas Munro's individualistic raiyatwari scheme, and has been losing vitality since 1820. Mr. C P. Ramaswami Aiyar, in the pamphlet before quoted, remarks :

"In Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, Book III, Vol. 10, villagers are

contemplated as constructing and maintaining in their corporate capacity works of public utility"; and Professor Rhys Davids says :

"Villagers are described in the Buddhist books as uniting all their care to build *mohallas* and rest-houses, to mend the roads between their own and adjacent villages, and even to lay out parks." (Vide P. Bannerjee's *Public Administration in Ancient India*, p. 293. note 2.) In Mysore, now, in army districts, the villagers give half a day's work free, per week, for works of public utility and the aggregate value of the work done is astounding. Every village in times of the *Arthashastra* (14th century B.C.) formed an integral part of the general administrative system and the village was the foundation of the governmental edifice. The village government of those days partook not only of the administration of executive, but also of judiciary functions, as will appear from the Ceylon inscriptions dealing with the administration of criminal justice of communal courts. To the credit of the Madras Government it must be said that, as against Sir T. Munro, who was a thorough individualist, the Madras Board of Revenue desired in the early years of the last century to have the authority of the village institutions unimpaired. But Sir Thomas Munro had his way, and the village communities lost their vitality.

The last Administration Report of Mysore (1915-16) says (P. 278) on The Village Improvement Scheme, that "the villagers contributed Rs. 47,083 either in cash or in labour" during the year the Government helping with grants amounting to Rs. 44,978. It says :

"The village committees continued to evince much interest in this work, and many works of public utility, such as construction of school buildings, sinking wells and opening roads, clearing lantana and planting trees, were carried out through their exertions throughout the State."

Conferences of the village committees were held in four districts "to take stock of the work done by the committees, to

discuss the needs and requirements of the rural population, and to concert measures and draw up programmes for improving the economic and sanitary condition of the villages." The villagers fell in gladly with this communal work which is on their traditional lines, giving definite amounts of free labour, as stated above, to the improvement of their village. The old sense of communal obligation still survives, and the Mysore Government had widely utilised and fostered it.

The characteristics of the village were a group of houses surrounded by a large tract of land, arable and pasture; each resident had a site free of rent for house, yard and garden. The establishment consisted of the officers and craftsmen, whose services were free to all, and who were given land, and various other rights to shares of produce, as remuneration. These consisted of a headman, an accountant, a watchman who also discharged some police functions, a boundaryman, a superintendent of tanks and watercourses, a pujari, a school master and astrologer, a doctor, a musician, a poet, a dancing girl, a barber, a washerman, a cow-keeper, a potter, a smith and a carpenter. The village assembly governed, elected by "pot-tickets," and formed committees for branches of work; the land was communal property and re-distributed from time to time. All householders appear to have had votes, but certain qualifications were laid down for eligibility for election as a Pancha (Councillor).

In the Report of the Decentralisation Committee appointed in 1907 by Edward VII—composed of five Englishmen and one Indian, Romesh Chander Dutt—Part III, Chap. XVIII, P. 694, we read :

"Throughout the greater part of India, the village constitutes the primary territorial unit of Government organisation, and from the villagers are built of larger administration entities "

The village is described from the Gazetteer, as above, from older sources, with its "customary rules and its little staff of functionaries, artisans and traders". These villages, says the Report, "formerly possessed a large degree of a local autono-

my," but this autonomy has now disappeared owing to the establishment of local, civil and criminal courts, the present revenue and police organisation, the increase of communication, the growth of individualism, and the operation of the individual raiyatwari system which is extending even in the north of India. Nevertheless the village remains the first unit of administration, the principal village functionaries—the headman, the accountant, and the village workman—are largely utilised and paid by Government, and there is still a certain amount of common village feeling and interests.

"Paid by Government"—those three words explain the killing of the old village system. The officials became the servants of a higher official—Sub-Tahsildar, Tahsildar, Deputy-Collector or Collector—looking to him for favour and reward, not to the villagers. Thus they became village tyrants instead of village servants, and the Soul of the village, the responsibility to one's brother-villagers, died.

It is admitted that the village communities have disintegrated under British administration, but the Report urges their re-establishment. It seems that some witnesses doubted "whether the people are sufficiently advanced in education and independence for any measure of village autonomy"; there speaks the spirit of the bureaucrat. The village had been autonomous for thousands of years; invasions, changes of Rule, lapse of time, had left them active; a century and a half of British rule had made them unfit, in this witness' mind, to manage their own affairs.

Why this strange deterioration under a rule supposed to be uplifting ? Because, on the Procrustes-bed of Bureaucracy, all that did not fit in had to be chopped off; the villagers had their own ways, which had served them well, but they were not the Collector's ways, so they were bad. Only Home Rule will re-integrate village Government.

However, the Report desires the development of a Panchayat system, and says (P. 736) :

"We consider that as Local Self-Government should commence in the villages with the establishment of village Panchayats, so the next step should be the constitution of boards for areas of similar size than a district. We desire, therefore, to see sub-district boards universally established as the principal agencies of rural board associations."

Unhappily it adds to its recommendation a condition which however well meant, would ensure its being still-born as a dead failure. For it is essential, says the Report, that the Panchayat movement, should be completely under the eye and hands of the district authorities. Supervision of affairs in the villages is, and should remain, one of the main functions of Tahsildars and Sub-Divisional Officers.

Tie up a baby's arms and legs, and then leave it to teach itself to walk. If it does not succeed, blame the baby. The free baby will learn equilibrium through tumbles; the tied-up baby will become paralysed, and will never walk.

I hope that our Secretary of State will establish Panchayats by an Act bassed on the admirable one drawn up by the Hon. Mr. T. Rangachariar, that he tried vainly to introduce in the Madras Legislative Council. I have handed it to him with Mr. Rangachariar's careful and weighty monograph, and it may be that the rejected of Madras may be the accepted of Westminster. The Act will be found as Appendix III.

I may quote here, on the establishment of Panchayats, what I have said elsewhere :

"Village needs would thus be made known, and if necessary they could be represented by the Panchayat to a higher authority. The village would become articulate through its Panchayat, and would no longer be the dumb and often driven creature which it is today. And it would be brought into touch with the larger life. The Panchayat might invite lecturers, organise discussions, arrange amusements, games, etc. All village life would be lifted to a higher level, widened and enriched by such orga-

nisation, and each village, further, forming one of a group of villages, would realise its unity with others, and thus become an organ of the larger corporate life."

The corresponding unit in the Towns to the village in the country is the Ward, and the Ward Panchayat, like the village one, should be elected by the Household Suffrage. All towns with population over 5,000 should have Ward Panchayats under control of the Municipality. Below that population, a Ward Panchayat would be the only municipal authority. These Ward Councils should take up the smaller town matters, now neglected because the Municipality is too heavily burdened to attend to them properly. The Elementary Schools in each Ward should be in its charge: scavenging and sanitation generally, and care for the cleanliness of the streets and latrines; provision and superintendence of stands for hire vehicles and resting carts, with water-troughs for horses and cattle; the inspection of foodstuffs and prevention of adulteration; arbitration in small disputes as in France—where so much litigation is prevented by the appointment of a small tradesman as a local judge—inspection of workshops, wells, etc.,—all these matters would naturally fall into the hands of the Ward Councils. Where there is a Municipality, that body would delegate to the Ward Council such matters as it thought fit.

(c) *The Taluqa or Tahsil Board*

The next rung in the ladder of Local Self-Government will be the body intermediate between the Panchayat and the District Board; the name will vary in different Provinces. With us in Madras, the Presidency is divided into 26 Districts and these into 96 Taluqas; for general purposes these may, if preferred, be termed Sub-Districts the name used in the Decentralisation Commission Report. But the Taluqa, or its corresponding division outside Madras, should be the area controlled by the Board.

The Report calls them Sub-District Boards, but itself suggests the better name of Taluqa or Tahsil, taking these definite areas, already existing, as the area of control for the Boards intermediate between Panchayats and District Board. In each of these

there should be a Board, its electorate consisting of the Panchayats in its area, and of all persons now qualified to vote in Firkas; the qualification is only a property one and may be amended later.

The Panchas would thus have a second vote, earned by public service, and would have their special representatives on the Taluqa Board, each representing his own village's common interests. The Decentralisation Report strongly urges that these Boards should form an essential part of the scheme of Local Self-Government, with adequate resources and a large measure of independence.

Their functions should include control of Secondary and High Schools, with Model Farms in rural, and Technical Institutes in urban areas. Inter-village roads and their lighting where necessary, water-ways and irrigation channels outside villages, but within the Taluqa, should be under their care. They should form Co-operative Societies, and where these are not established, they should hold agricultural machinery for hiring to villagers, establish granaries for storage of grain, dairy farms, with stud-bulls to be hired to villagers, breeding-stables for horses, and generally they should organise industry wherever Cooperative Societies are not available.

(*d*) *District Boards*

Some of our political reformers would abolish District Boards. As at present advised, I prefer to keep them.

This third grade upwards of Local Self-Government consists of the District Boards in the country and Municipalities in the larger towns. The electorate of the District Board should be the Taluqa Boards under its jurisdiction, and the general Taluqa electorate. This gives every Taluqa Board member a second vote, as in the case of Panchas, deserved by public work.

Their functions would be to discharge all the duties which affect the district as a whole, to supervise the Taluqa Boards, and to decide any appeals by Panchayats from a Taluqa Board

decision. They would assign the proportion of local taxation to be raised in each Taluqa, and the grants to be made to each from the grant received from the Provinical Council for the District. They would appoint the necessary District Officers, such as the Engineer for the District Public Works Department, the Inspector of Secondary and High Schools in the Taluqas, the Sanitary Inspector, etc. Public roads, local railways and waterways would be under their inspection. The District Town would include the usual District Buildings, and the District Colleges for Arts, Science, Agriculture, Industries, Crafts.

Even in Lord Ripon's time there was a feeble organisation making for self-government.

Keene remarks :

"The germs of Home Rule already existed not only in the traditional institutions of the rural commune so often described but in towns and cities where—in whatever leading strings—local bodies regulated the conservancy and the watch-and-ward of the streets."

Slow as progress has been, yet some progress has been made, and when these Boards are wholly elective, have elected chairmen, and real power over their own areas, the progress will be rapid. When Local Self-Government is established as an essential part of Home Rule, we shall see the Village Panchayat abolishing such degrading punishments as the stocks and flogging, and the villagers will be treated as free men, worthy of respect. Moreover, agriculture will be taught at convenient centres, and model farms will be established both for training and experiment. Mysore has three such farms. The raiyats will be helped to improve methods of cultivation, suitable manures, and clean seed of the best kinds. The Forest Laws will be modified and the ancient fashion of rings of grazing ground will be provided for their cattle.

In Mysore, "the major portions of the forests were thrown open", says the last Report, "for the grazing of cattle of all descriptions, except goats." Panchayats will supervise village

schools suitable to the circumstances of the village, and training for adult raiyats willing to learn, while Taluqa Boards will, as suggested, arrange for the provision of stud-bulls, grain-storage, agricultural machinery etc., as reasonable terms for hire. Boys of bright intelligence will have the opportunity, through scholarships, of rising through Schools to College or of good agricultural or industrial or craft training. These things are not dreams, but things done in other civilised countries, where the people have Home Rule.

In the educational rescript of the Emperor of Japan, published in 1872, he directed that "henceforth Education shall be so diffused that there may not be a village with an ignorant family, nor a family with an ignorant member." Twenty-four years later, as we have seen, 92 per cent of the Japanese children of school-going age were in school. Why should not Indians do as well as Japanese, when here also Education is controlled by men of their own race ? For it must not be forgotten that the educated class is rooted in their ancestral villages, and many relatives of Vakils are raiyats. Despite the caste system, there is much more blending of classes here than in the West, and the village and town populations are closely interrelated. The bright boy of a raiyat's family becomes a Vakil, while the duller remains a raiyat. This keen sympathy has been shown in the earnest but futile resolution of the Congress from its second sessions onwards, and when we have Home Rule the resolutions will become operative.

(*e*) *Local Government Board*

The Local Government system must have at its head a Local Government Board, and its functions must be defined by an Act of the Provincial Legislative Council on the lines of the Local Government Board Act of 1871, and the subsequent cognate enactments, as proposed in the address of the Home Rule League presented last month in Delhi. The remarks of the Royal Sanitary Commission in England in 1879 are very opposite here, though naturally spoken there, under the circumstances of the need of a central sanitary officer.

One recognised and sufficiently powerful Minister, not to centralise administration, but on the contrary, to set local life in motion—a real motive power, and an authority to be referred to for assistance and guidance by all the sanitary authorities for Local Government throughout the country.

The Commissioners go on to describe the difficulties besetting Local Government in England, in words which recall the despairing remarks of our Municipal President in Madras :

"Great is the *vis intrtioe* to be overcome; the repugnance to self-taxation; the practical distrust of science; and the number of persons interested in offending against sanitary laws, even amongst those who must constitute chiefly the local authorities to enforce them."

Thus difficulties are alleged by Englishmen in India are reasons for withholding complete Local Self-Government, and for making timid experiments that may continue for centuries. Englishmen in England, face to face with similar difficulties, find in them only reasons for setting "local life in motion".

The object of the English Act was to concentrate in one department of the Government the supervision of the laws relating to public health, the relief of the poor and Local Government.

The Board is composed of unpaid members who do nothing —the Lord President of the Council, all the Secretaries of State, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—a most august and reverend body. All the Board is empowered to do can be done, and is so done, by the President of the Board, who sits in Parliament, is generally a Cabinet Minister, and has a salary of £ 2,600 a year. He has a Permanent Secretary with five Assistants, a Legal adviser, a Chief Engineering Inspector, a Chief Medical Officer with a staff of medical inspectors, architects and engineers with the "ordinary staff of a Government office." If under our scheme of the Executive Council, an Indian member was the President of the Local Government, omitting the ornamental Board, it might suffice.

The "growth of the Function of the Board" is indicated by its absorption of the duties of the Poor Law Commissioners and poor Law Board by 41 Acts of Parliament between 1835 and 1870, and by 154 Acts between 1871 and 1907, both inclusive. The legal authority states that the lists are probably "not exhaustive". They suffice. On Regulations, Orders, Bye-Laws, *et hoc genous omne*, I do not dare to enter. The President of our Board, when appointed, may study them.

Provincial Legislative Councils and Supreme Legislative Council

The scheme of the National Congress and the All-India Muslim League has been before the country for a year, and has been presented to the Viceroy and Secretary of State for India. It is printed as Appendix IV. I do not discuss it here, it has been fully discussed, from all points of view, during the past two years. We have all worked for it, honestly and zealously, con fining ourselves with its four corners. We have now to remember that we have the duty of helping the country to work under it during the transitional period for which it was designed—differing in this from the Memorandum of the Nineteen, which was suggested as containing Post-War Reforms. The Congress League scheme was, professedly, a bridge, leading from the present condition to that considered in the third part of the last year's Congress Resolution.

That, in the Reconstruction of the Empire, India shall be lifted from the position of a Dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the self-governing Dominions.

That now becomes our objective. We must continue to agitate for the Congress Scheme until it is passed. The final scheme will, of course, include the place of the Indian States under complete self-government, and of the representation of India in the Central Imperial Council or Parliament, or Cabinet—questions which were deliberately left out of our transitional scheme.

On the general question of the work of the Provincial Legis-

lative Councils, I may perhaps say that it will be their duty to make grants to District Boards which, in turn, will distribute them to the Taluqa and village Boards in their area. No interference with their use of grants should be made, save where palpable irregularities justify the interference of the Local Government President. Freedom to work and to blunder—to a non-ruinous extent—must be allowed if Local Self-Government is to become a reality.

Another large portion of their work will be the fostering of industries in their Provinecs, and the helping of the District Boards by experiments of general utility, so as to prevent useless reduplication of research. Thus, in Mysore experiments were carried on with respect to ragi, paddy, sugar-cane, ground-nut, areca-nut and cotton, useful to the whole State. Demonstrations in the use of machinery and apparatus—churns, ploughs, seed drills, etc.—would probably be conducted best by Provincial officers. So also demonstrations of improved methods of jaggery-making, of preservation of cattle-manure, that, in Mysore, were attended by gatherings of raiyats. Lectures and distribution of vernacular literature were also carried on there. Six new kinds of ploughs were introduced, and sold by the hire-purchase system. Mineral and chemical analyses, mycological and entomological research are also best carried on at a well-equipped Central Institute. But these divisions will be settled by experience. It is good to read that, in Mysore, the raiyats warmly welcomed the instruction offered.

I mention these facts in order to show something of what is being done by Indians for Indians in an Indian State. It may re-assure the timid, and make them feel that Home Rule implies prosperity and not catastrophe.

Self-Government by Compartments

Lately, a new scheme has been sprung on the country, after careful preliminary notices and hints in the Anglo-Indian Press. It is known as "Self-Government by compartments." It is eagerly snatched at by the Europeans, and creates a double set of

authorities, one on the present lines, irresponsible to the people and with control of the purse, in which all real power is vested; the other a simulacrum, or wraith, of a responsible Ministry and an elected Assembly, ruling a department, or departments of the Government, to be given more power if the real Government approve of them, to be deprived of power if the real Government disapprove of them.

The real Government can ensure their failure, by giving them such important departments as Education and Sanitation, which need a very heavy outlay, and restricting the funds allowed to them on the plea of necessity. They can then be dismissed with contumely as incompetent. The lesson of Local Government should be laid to heart, for that has been a trial of a similar system, in which officials have played the part of the real Government in a new scheme or the real Government may be—may give them unimportant departments on which to try their prentice hands, so that failure may not matter, and the country will be indifferent to them. There are many other objections to the scheme, which is verily the giving of a stone for bread. But the root objection is that it keeps India entirely subordinate, when she demands Self-Government. It breathes the deep distrust of Indian capacity, characteristic of the bureaucracy, and makes the preposterous claim that India is to remain in leading strings because another Nation claim the right to rule her, and to give her crumbs of freedom from its own well-spread table.

It is the negation of every principle which Britain and her Allies have proclaimed in the face of the world. The Congress has asked for a definite scheme of Reforms; it can be satisfied with nothing less than the adoption of their essential principles. We may ask for more; we cannot ask for less. Nations go forward, not backward, in their struggle for Freedom.

Deputation

If, as I suppose, you will send a deputation to England, to discuss the actual statute which will have to be passed in Parliament to give effect to the scheme, you would do well to give

them,a mandate to stand unflinchingly by the essential principles of the scheme : the substantial majority in the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, and the power of the purse. If these are not granted, further discussion is useless; if they are, then we can discuss subsidiary matters.

If such a deputation be sent, we must agitate strongly and steadily here in support of it. It is said that the battle of India is to be fought in Britain. In the sense that we must put our demands clearly before Britain, that is true. But the real battle must be fought here, for Britain will naturally limit her legislation to that which India strongly demands. The great Labour Party will help us with its votes, but we must show, by our attitude that we are determined to win our Freedom.

Vernacular

There is also much work to do in helping the people to prepare themselves for the new powers which will be placed in their hands. And for this, the work must be done in the vernaculars of each Province, as only by their mother-tongue can the heart and brain of the masses be reached.

Sooner or later, preferably sooner, Province will have to be re-delimited on a linguistic basis. The official languages, for a time, will have to be two : the Vernacular and Ehglish, as in some parts of Canada, French and English are used. Only then will the masses be able to take their full share in public life.

The New Objective

What is to be our new objective ?

We have to formulate a scheme to carry out the third part of the Congress Resoltuion; we can do this only so far as British India is concerned : (i) The place of the Indian States will have to be considered by the United Kingdom in the light of the treaties existing between the Paramount Power and the Princes. So far as British India is concerned, we have to see that no arrangement is made to affecting it, which admits to any

voice in our Councils any Prince who retains absolute power within his own State, or who is not ruling on lines similar to those adopted within British India. Nor must any have authority in British India, which is not also possessed over his State by British India. (ii) With regard to any Central Imperial Authority, whatever it may be, India must have a position commensurate with her importance in the Empire, otherwise she will be ruled by the United Kingdom and the Dominions in all Imperial matters, and may to turned into a plantation, with her industrial development strangled. If, as is suggested, the War Council should evolve into the Central Authority, then its powers should be confined to questions of Imperial Defence. No other questions should be introduced without being referred to the Self-Governing Nations composing the Empire, and if one Nation objects to it, the question must remain excluded. Each such Nation must exercise complete control over its own tariff and fisus—as indeed the present Dominions now exercise it—subject to a charge for Imperial Defence.

The visit to India of the Indian Secretary of State make it necessary that we should formulate very definitely what we demand, for it is not clear the legislation is on the anvil and we must take Mr. Bonar Law's advice to strike while the iron is hot.

With regard to our new objective, I suggest that we should ask the British Government to pass a Bill during 1918, establishing Self-Government in India on lines resembling those of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Act to come into force at a date to be a laid down therein, preferably 1923, at the latest 1928, the intermediate five or ten years being occupied with the transference of the Government from British to Indian hands, maintaining the British tie as in the Dominions.

The transference may be made in stages, beginning with some such scheme as that of the Congress-League, with its widened electorate, the esssntials being : half the Executive Councils elected by the elected members of the legislatures, control of the purse, and a substantial majority in the Supreme and Provincial Councils.

We asked first for representation, which was supposed to give influence ; this has proved to mean nothing. Now we ask for a partnership in the governing of India ; the Governments have the power of dissolution and the veto ; the people have the power of the purse ; that is the second stage, a partnership of equals—co-operation. The third step will be that of complete Home Rule, to come automatically in 1923, or 1928.

We look with confidence to the All-India Muslim League to assist us in this work.

The suggested lines are :

(i) That all Legislative Councils shall be wholly elected.

(ii) That members of the Public Services shall be included in the electorate, but shall not be eligible for election, nor shall they, while holding places of profit under the Crown, take part in political controversies. This rule does not include retired members, even though pensioned.

(iii) The Prerogative of the Crown including the appointment of its Privy Councillors, the Governor-General and the Governors, while exercising that right with the approval of the Secretary of State for India, shall also call upon a member of the Legislative Council to form a Ministry, the members of which shall be sworn in as Privy Councillors, but who shall be removable by a vote of want of confidence passed in the Legislature.

(iv) The Legislative Bodies, Supreme and Provincial, shall be unicameral.

(v) The Indian Army and Navy, for Indian Defence, shall be under the control of the Viceroy as the representative of the Crown, and shall be supported out of the revenues of India. The contribution of India to Imperial Defence shall be adjusted between the Government of India and the War Council.

(vi) The formation, regulation and encouragement of the Mercantile Marine shall vest in the Government of India, subject to such international regulations as may be agreed upon after the war.

With regard to (iii), (iv), and (v), I may add :

(a) Much discussion will arise on this proposal, but it is submitted that the great variety of interests of opinions in India of themselves render hasty legislation—the checking of which is supposed to be the function of a second Chamber—unlikely. The power of the Governor to dissolve the Council, inherent in the prerogative, with the power of veto' gives sufficient check in a country so conservative as India.

(b) In the United Kingdom, the Cabinet has no statutory basis. The King in Council theoretically rules, *i.e.*, the King and his Privy Councillors. But the ignorance of George II of the English language caused him to retire from the Presidency of the Council, and the Cabinet grew up. Every member of the Cabinet is sworn in as a Privy Councillor, and when the Cabinet falls, its members remains Privy Councillors ; but only attend when summoned on great State occasions. We have to respect the rights of the Crown, while at the same time, we create the responsibility of Ministers to the Legislature.

(c) "Indian Army" means an Army composed of Indians and officered by Indians, and does not include the British soldiers now employed here. Thus, the country will be relieved of the relatively huge cost now incurred for the short service system, transport depots and recruiting in England, and the like. The Indian Army will be composed of Territorials and large Reserves.

The Secretary of State for India

The year 1917 will ever remain memorable in Indian history

for the sudden change in the policy of Great Britain towards India. The swiftness of the change is marvellous, almost incredible even to us who have striven for it. On August 20th, the first demand of last year's Congress was granted in substance though not in form; we asked for a Royal Proclamation, because that was the most gracious and impressive form and would have made our Emperor yet more popular; we have been given an announcement by the Cabinet of Great Britain, representing the Royal Will.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State is now among us w.th other well-kuown public men from the United Kingdom. At this stage, nought can be said of the outcome of the visit. But I may rightly place on record the fact that free and full speech has been granted to India's representatives, with friendly and patient hearing from H.E. the Viceroy and from Mr. Montagu.

There has been no shutting out of opinions hostile to the present bureaucratic system of Government, for Lokamanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandi and I may myself were severally granted full hearing; similar liberty was given to prominent members of the Congress and Muslim League. The Home Rule Leagues were treated equally well.

The outcome is on the lap of the Gods. We know the .rength of the vested interests opposed to us, but we have faith the justice of God and in the frendliness of all Britons who are true to the traditions of their country. The wish of organised labour in Great Britain to exchange fraternal delegates with the Congress and Home Rule Legaues is a sign of the new Brotherhood between the British and Indian Democracies. The Home Rule Leagues have appointed Mr. Baptista as their fraternal delegate to the Annual Labour Conference next month, and Major Grahm Pole comes to us from them. I trust that the Congress will also nominate its fraternal delegates to the Labour Conference, and welcome its messenger to us, and that a link will thus be formed which will draw closer together the United Kingdom and India. For this, as well as for the coming

of the Secretary of the State to India, will 1917 be marked as a red-letter year.

Our Interned Brothers

It is with deep sorrow that we record the non-release of the Muslim leaders, Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali. For three and a quarter long years they have been withdrawn from public life, and condemned to the living death of internment. To high-spirited and devoted patriots, no punishment could be more galling and more exasperating. Even had they sinned deeply, the penalty has been paid and we, who believe in their innocence and honour them for their fidelity to their religion, can only lay at their feet the exprsssion of our affectionate admiration, and our assurance that their long-drawn-out suffering will be transmuted into power, when the doors are thrown open to them, and they receive the homage of the Nation.

Our Divisions

Many observers of Indian public life have noted the fissiparous tendency in our political associations, and reactionaries make this a reason for denying to us constitutional liberty. Rightly considered it is a reason for granting it, though to some this statement may seem paradoxical. But what is the position ?

We have a Nation, composed of many communities and opinions, trying to obtain liberty. We have above it, a Government, holding all power and all patronage, and able to crush by Executive Orders those whom it considers to be advocates of excessive changes. It tends to ally itself with any party or community which will help it to stave off legislation that diminishes its power. Its natural tendency is to watch for any sign of fission, and to ally itself with the weaker party to cursh the stronger, as did the East India Company in its so-called "conquest of India". If there be no sign of fission, it may be possible to initiate one, on the lines of the despatch to Lord Lytton when Viceroy of India with regard to a desired war : "If there be no pretext, you must invent one." A similar policy was followed when Dadabhai Naoroji was sent to the British Parlia-

ment; Mr. Bhownagri was set up against him, and succeeded in ousting a strong reformer and replacing him by a reactionary. No political situation could be more unhealthy.

First, take the two great communities of Hindus and Musalmans. They form two natural parties in the Nation, with the Christian Government above them as the third party for whose favour they compete. Hence Hindu-Musalman divisions, riots, and the rest—which do not exist in Indian States, wherein the Ruler belongs to one of the two Great Religions, and has to rule men of both—and the constant efforts to dissolve the entente cordiale arrived at after long discussions at Calcutta and at Lucknow last year.

There will always be a number in each community who do not feel themselves bound by any agreement come to by the organised political bodies, containing the more reasonable and far-seeing of each community; and these, again, motivated by bride or threat, unofficial but made by officials, an unorganised and irresponsible crowd, will always land recruits to support the Government, in the hope of obtaining special concessions for their sectional interests.

Hence, also the anti-Brahmana movement, in the Madras Presidency, with its Association of a few hundred members and its three organs in the Press. It is now happily obscured by a real non-Brahmana Association, the Madras Presidency Association, led by the veteran leader, Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai, and already many thousands strong. The anti-Brahmana movement aims chiefly at places in the administration, and hopes to gain them more easily by praising the Government and opposing Home Rulers.

Hence, also, various similar movements in other Province . and stick being good enough for beating the Home Rule dog.

There is no need for anxiety about these divisions, which must always present kaleidoscopic charges, so long as India is under the rule of an irresponsible Government.

When the third, non-National party, no longer governs,

the National parties will become grouped into healthy constituents of the body politic, distinguished by differences of principle. The use of power will create a sense of responsibility, and responsibility will bring about reasonable discipline.

We make too much of these transitory difficulties and quarrels, and give them an importance far beyond their real mischief-making power. They will assume their proper proportions when we have won Home Rule.

Isolated Reforms

I do not propose to dwell on the isolated Reforms for which the Congress has asked during the whole period of its existence. The majority of Congressmen are tired of asking for the same thing over and over again, and feel that it is better to concentrate on Home Rule, since, once the people have power, they can get rid of bad laws and make good ones for themselves.

Indian Legislatures will take up the Congress Resolutions, and carry into law all that are applicable to the changed conditions. Free India will separate Executive from Judicial functions, and also separate Revenue Officers, Judiciary and Police, place the lower Judiciary under the High Court instead of the Executive, pass Education Acts, make trial by Jury general, Protect her Emigrants and Indians settled abroad, deal with land settlement equitably, organise and develop Indian Industries, examine for her Services within her own borders, re-organise her administration so as to abolish racial inequalities, and establish Military Colleges to fit her youth for the Emperor's Commissions.

The whole of the special legislation against constitutional agitation—as understood in Great Britain—penalising writing and speech which do not incite to crime nor transgress the law of libel, will be swept away, as unworthy of a civilised country. The Executive will be deprived of the power to punish without trial, to imprison, incarcerate, impoverish, deport, intern and extern, on secret police accusations and suspicions, and codfidential reports of magistrates. No man shall thus suffer without

than his officers and his army. and cannot explain, while battles are going on, every move in a campaign; he is to be justified or condemned by his results. Up till now, knowing myself to be of this Nation only by love and service, not by birth, I have claimed no authority of leadership, but have only fought in the front of the battle and served as best I might. Now, by your election, I take the place which you have given, and will strive to fill it worthily.

Enough of myself. Let us think of the Mother.

To see India free, to see her hold up her head among the Nations, to see her sons and daughters respected everywhere, to see her worthy of her mighty Past, engaged in building a yet mightier Future —is not this worth working for, worth suffering for, worth living and worth dying for ? Is there any other land which evokes such love for her spirituality, such admiration for her literature, such homage for her valour, as this glorious mother of Nations, from whose womb went forth the races that now, in Europe and America, are leading the world ? And has any land suffered as our India has suffered, since her sword was broken on Kurukshetra, and the peoples of Europe and of Asia swept across her borders, laid waste her cities, and discrowned her Kings. They came to conquer, but they remained to be absorbed. At last, out of those mingled people, the Divine Artificer has welded a Nation, compact not only of her own virtues, but also of those her foes had brought to her, and gradually eliminating the vices which they had also brought.

After a history of millennia, stretching far back out of the ken of mortal eyes; having lived with, but not died with, the mighty civilisations of the Past; having seen them rise and flourish and decay, until only their sepulchres remained, deep buried in earth's crust; having wrought, and triumphed, and suffered, and having survived all changes unbroken; India, who
suffered, and having survived all changes unbroken; India, who
has been verily the Crucified among Nations, now stands on this her Resurrection morning, the Immortal, the Glorious, the Ever-Young; and India shall soon be seen, proud and self-reliant, strong and free, the radiant Splendour of Asia, as the Light and the Blessing of the World.

4

PITFALLS OF MONTFORD PROPOSALS

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

With history looking on us, our labours today may well strike sympathy in the hearts of those who have the refinement to feel the agony of a race that, conscious of its rights, is struggling to realise them. The struggle is arduous, every step of it is laborious but our purpose is firm and courage is ending. We are earnest and we mean to achieve our object, and it is at such a moment that you have called me to a duty that is most responsible, most onerous. I would not be human if I did not feel the honour you have chosen to confer on me—the greatest that you had in your gift—and I would be less than human if I did not express to you my deep sense of gratitude for the high privilege so generously conferred. But while I am expressing to you my gratitude, I am not, I fear, quite unselfish in my acknowledgment, for to be thankful for a favour is to lay out for another. I have much indulgence to ask of you to overlook my deficiencies and to assist me in conducting the proceedings of this great Congress of a nation struggling for freedom, to a successful end. This Special Session of the Congress is of exceptional importance and therefore of exceptional difficulty. Our task is burdensome, for we have to discuss the proposed constitutional reforms as emanating from a Secretary of State and a Viceroy who, at least in their declarations, have not been wanting of a spirit of sympathy towards Indian demands. Their frank acknowledgment of the justice of our claim to equal civic rights with the rest of the British Empire lends to their proposals a sincerity; which it is difficult to question. But in a matter so grave as the laying of the foundation of our constitu-

*Presidential address delivered by Hasan Imam at the Special Congress Session held at Bombay on 29 Aug and 1st Sept., 1918.

tional structure the duty of analysing and shifting the proposals outweighs all considerations of mere courtliness or thanks-giving. While acknowledging the high purpose of the British Cabinet in directing an investigation into the present Indian situation and in desiring to find a solution thereof and while rendering the fullest tribute of praise to Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford for the single-mindedness with which they have collaborated in formulating their proposals, we yet, as the persons most affected, have to examine the proposals on their merits. Reading their joint Report it will strike any observer that in the first portion of it—which I regard as a historical survey of events leading to the present situation—the illustrious authors have by their declarations, furnished strength to our demand for that charter of liberty for which we have been fighting for the third of a century through the Congress, in spite of much discouragement, at times attended with unseemly and indecent ridicule. When we read in the Report a passage such as this; "We must remember too that the educated Indian has come to the front by hard work; he has seized the education which we offered him because he first saw its advantages; and it is he who has advocated and worked for political progress. All this stands to his credit. For the last thirty years he has developed in his Congress and latterly in the Muslim League, free popular convocations which express his ideals. We owe him sympathy because he has conceived and pursued the idea of managing his affairs, an aim which no Englishman can fail to respect," our memory naturally goes back to the contemptuous phrase of Lord Dufferin's "microscopic minority," used in reference to the Congress when that noble Marquis was not in a mood to accord to educated Indians a recognition. Time has justified us and today we stand on the principles of our demand where we did thirty three years back.

The announcement of the 20th August, 1917, declaring the policy of His Majesty's Government certifies to the correctness of our demand and that our claim was not prematurely conceived is indirectly acknowledged in the Report in the following noteworthy passage : "It is no longer sufficient to administer India; it is necessary also to satisfy her political aspiration; and

because we were all too slow in taking cognizance of the changes that were occurring, the task is all the heavier because there is lee-way to make up." The Report is full of generous acknowledgments of our claim and if acknowledgments alone could not merely gratify but satisfy us the need for us to meet in this Congress would not exist. It is when we come to the proposals themselves that disappointment meets us. The Secretary of State and the Viceroy, it has to be admitted, have made their proposals with a genuine desire to ultimately secure for us the right of governing ourselves and determining our own future, but the proposals in themselves seem to be afraid of themselves and do not comprise any such real measure reform as we had a right to expect. We realise the difficulty of their delicate task, placed as they have been between conflicting bureaucratic and Indian interest.

The deficiencies of the proposals appear to me to be due not to any intention on their part to withhold from us what we should have, but to a spirit of compromise to secure the support of the bureaucrats. It, therefore, behoves us to consider the proposals in a spirit of sympathy and not of mere carping criticism. Now our criterion is the Congress-League scheme, and, if the proposals lack the essentials of that, we should with all the emphasis that, we can command, make our protest; but we must guard against a hasty rejection of the proposals. Opinion in the country is more or less divided on the subject of the acceptance of the rejection of the proposals. There is a small section of political thinkers that advocates a rejection of the proposals. I treat their views with respect, for their attitude of mind is based upon the political sagacity of not allowing a consent decree to be passed against them and upon the political philosophy that national rights have to be won and not merely to be received as gifts.

Underlying their principle of rejection is the desire to continue the struggle for freedom and everyone will admit that the severer the struggle the greater the vigor of the race. On the other hand, there is another class of our political thinkers that stands for the acceptance of the proposals with the proviso

that we must go on asking for more. The country, however, is agreed that the proposals, as they stand, certainly do not embody the essentials of our demand and are not calculated to satisfy our just aspirations. If you will permit me to point out, there seems to me no material difference between those that advocate rejection and those that advise acceptance, for the common feature of both is to continue the struggle till our rights are won. In politics as in war, not combat but victory is the object to be pursued and where ground is yielded, not taking it would be to abandon what you have won. The Secretary of State and the Viceroy in their Report have earnestly exhorted us to put our heads together in constructive statesmanship and I have no doubt that at this crucial juncture in our political history we shall preserve that deliberative calm which is necessary for the building of a great project.

The proposals have placed us under a great disappointment for, though the essentials of our demand are acknowledged in theory, they have not been conceded in substance. Under disappointment our mind would naturally be prone to be occupied with the evil that disquiets it, but true wisdom lies in calmly finding out the means to remove the evil. The history of our Congress is a history of patient constitutional struggle. The traditions that we of the present generation have inherited from those that founded and established this great national organisation are of perservance in the face of even tremendous opposition, and today it stands acknowledged as the champion of the rights of the Indian people. Those traditions are dear to us and we cherish them. We know no extremists and we know no moderates, names that have been devised by "our enemies" to divide us. We know only one cause and we have only one purpose in view. Our demand is the demand of a United India, and so long as our rights are denied to us we shall continue the struggle.

"Unchained in soul—though manacled in limb—

"Unwarped by prejudice—unawed by wrong,

"Friends to the weak and fearless of the strong."

Coming now to a discussion of the details of the reforms our attention must be first directed to the terms of the declaration of policy as announced on the 20th August last year. That declaration lays down the policy to be :

(1) "The increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration."

(2) "The gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire "

Towards the fulfilment of the above policy the decision is stated in the announcement, "that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible." The Secretary of State in making the announcement stated that "progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages." He further explained that "the British Government and the Government of India on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be judges of the time and measure of each advance." The policy as enunciated is a pledge to the Indian people that they shall be raised from their present object position to one of dignity and honour as nation, and it is worthy of the freedom-loving British race. But it is when we examine the cautious qualifying phrases of the Secretary of State that we come to suspect the length of time that we may have to wait before there is fruition of that policy. The successive stages may be distant stages as the Reform proposals clearly demonstrate and "the time and measure of each advance" may prove illusory, dependent as it is declared to be on the "extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their (Indian People's) sense of responsibility. The decision that substantial steps in the direction of the policy should be taken as soon as possible brought the Secretary of State to us, but where do we find the 'substantial steps' in the proposals ? I shall now venture to place before you, as briefly as I can, my estimate of the proposed reforms.

The Government of India

The Imperial Legislative Council is to be replaced by (1) a

Legislative Assembly of India consisting of about hundred membars and (2) by a Council of State consisting of about fifty members. The Legislative Assembly is to have an elected majority of two-thirds of its total strength, but the Assembly is to have a large majority of official and nominated members and it will be the supreme Legislative authority for India on all crucial questions and the revising authority upon all Indian Legislation. It will have the right to over-rule all the work of the Legislative Assembly in the matter of legislation, budget allotment and financial proposals, and even pass them at the bidding of the Governor-General over the head of the Legislative Assembly. There is no element of popular will in this, nor is the pretence made that there is any. Apart from the objection that the people's representative in the Legislative Assembly will be over-ridden by a body of men not representative of the people, the mischief of the proposals is accentuated by according to the members of the Council of State the status of a class by themselves. I see in that the danger of a division of our people, the formation of a new caste.

This will no doubt further strengthen the already existing arbitrary powers of the Government of India and, considering that it is proposed that British control over the Government of India should be relaxed, the danger of reckless irresponsibility in the Central Government will be enhanced. Our demand is for the amenability of Provincial and Central Governments alike to the people's wishes, but instead we are being given a Central Government more autocratic than ever. The joint Report admits that the bureaucratic system that has prevailed hitherto is no more suited to our needs, but the Second Chamber that is proposed and which is to have the decisive voice is to consist of bureaucrats and their nominees with a powerless minority of elected members. It would be, to my mind, the perpetuation of the bureaucratic rule that we have been striving to remove. We cannot give our willing assent to a packed Second Chamber created to render inoperative what the people's representatives decide. The proposal is reactionary in its character and by no manner of means can it be described as a reform intended to increase popular control. The creation of such a Second

Chamber is a confession of the distrust of the people—a distrust that is visible in the proposals as a whole.

Describing the legislative procedure the nervousness of the authors of the Report is made manifest. I quote from the Report. "A Government Bill ordinarily be introduced and carried through all the usual stages in the Legislative Assembly. It will then so, in the ordinary course, to the Council of State and if there amended in any way which the Assembly is not willing to accept, it will be submitted to a joint session of both the Houses by whose decision its ultimate fate will be decided. This will be the ordinary course of legislation. But it might well happen that amendments made by the Council of State were such as to be essential in the view of the Government if the purpose with which the Bill was originally introduced was to be achieved, and in this case the Governor-General-in-Council would certify that the amendments were essential to the interests of peace, order or good government. The Assembly would then not have power to reject or modify these amendments, nor would they lie open to revision". Not content with this the Report proceeds :

"Further, we advise that in cases of emergency certified by the Governor-General-in-Council, it should be open to the Government to introduce a Bill in the Council of State, and upon its being passed there merely report it to the Assembly." Similar, but even more cautious safeguards are provided for non-official members' bills. These extraordinary provisions to protect the Government against the people's representatives are particularly noteworthy when we find provided for the Government of India and the power of making Ordinances for emergent purposes. Reading the proposals contained in Chapter IX of the Report dealing with the so-called reforms in the Government of India, the impression is left on the mind of the reader, that the Central Government had been in the past the object of much tyranny and oppression by the people and special measures were needed to protect that Government. It is difficult to estimate the political reasons that have induced the illustrious authors of the Report to treat the Government of India and the people of India

as two combatants constantly pulling in opposite directions—the Government of India being always right and the people of India always wrong.

The ideal that we have always set before us is that the Government of India should be so constituted that the Government should be the Government of the people. So long as these extraordinary safeguards are devised and exist, it would be but natural for us to feel that those that carry on the Government are removed from us and as human beings, subject to human failings will subordinate the people's interest to theirs. No one can conceal the facts that the interests of the bureaucrat, whatever his services may have been widely the different from interests of the people and if the same bureaucrat is to shape the destinies of India, even at this juncture, the reason for the special safeguard is obvious. The cardinal principle of our demand is that Indian interests are not any more to be subservient to the interests of others, and if the proposed reforms are intended to restore to us what we have lost then the reformation of the Government of India should not be and must not be on the lines of the proposals but on those that would secure to the people at least an effective voice in the governance of the country. The Congress-League Scheme has been discarded as unworkable in practice. It may not be artistic in its features, it may have the defects of inexperience of actual administration, it may even appear to be crude in form. But we do not attack ourselves to the externals of the scheme but to the true spirit of it. We insist on the essentials being left untouched, we demand their incorporation in the reforms that may hereafter by ultimately decided on.

The proposal that in the Council of State the Ruling Princes should be associated with the Government of India for the purpose of deliberation on matters of what have been vaguely described 'common concern', is neither happy for us nor happy for them. By the very nature of their relations; with the Suzerain Power the Princes are in a state of subordination to the Governor-General as representing the King-Emperor. Their task in their own principalities is difficult enough and it will only add

to their burden to be invited to take part in the Council of State In British India. Then again there may be complications hereafter if the pledge of full responsible Government to us comes to be fulfilled, as we hope and trust it will be in the near future. The Council of State with its present proposed constitution spells to me the dread that the Government of India will at no time entertain a popular Assembly whose voice will be listened to, for if that were to be so the introduction of the Princes into the Council of State would be incompatible with their sovereign rights. Supposing that at a future date the Council of State becomes a representative body of British Indians, would it suit the Princes to descend from their high state to seat in a people's Assembly and would it suit us to have them in our midst ? What is the special need of the presence of the Princes in the Council of State ? Is not that Council, if established, strong enough, even without them, to protect the Government of India against the people ?

Dealing with fiscal legislation we are frankly told that the budget will be introduced in the Legislative Assembly but the Assembly will note vote it. Resolution upon budget matters, as indeed upon all other questions, will continue to be merely advisory in character and will stand on record as the considered opinion of the Assembly. This clearly is no advance upon the existing system. It no doubt is consistent with the safety of the constitution of the Government of India as proposed, but our protest is against such a constitution and our protest is against a budget that has not received the sanction of the people's representatives. It is certainly not in the direction of the Government of India that the illustrious authors of the Report propose to apply their considered opinion that "because we were all too slow in taking cognizance of the changes that were occurring the task is all the heavier because there is lee-way to make up."

This distrust of the people is further made manifest when the introduction of the Indian element into the Executive Council of the Governor-General is limited to but two. Our demand has been that at least half the number of the Executive Councillors should be Indians. In the proposals, while recommending the

appointment of a second Indian member, the illustrious authors of the Report say that they do not think it necessary to argue the expediency of enabling the wishes of India to be further represented in the cabinet of the country. The reason of this illiberality is not explained and we are left to judge for ourselves. It is admitted that the presence of an Indian Member in the Executive Council has proved of value in enabling the Government to have first-hand acquaintance with Indian opinion. Lord Morley's policy of appointing an Indian member to the Executive Council created a feeling of assurance amongst the people that at last the Government's attitude was to hear, if not to listen to, the people. Our claim to a larger increase in the Indian element of the Executive Council is based not merely on our just rights but also on the efficient and loyal performance by the Indian Members of their duties. I appreciate that the numerical strength of the Executive Council under the new constitution has not been disclosed and it may be that the existing number may, with changed conditions, be reduced, in which event the two Indian members, as proposed, will constitute a much larger proportion of the Indian element in the Executive Council than is the one Indian member in a Council of eight as at present. Judged by comparison even an illiberal increase of the Indian element in the Executive Council will mark a stage in India's political development. But is that enough ? We want a declaration of the proportion and that proportion to be half, as that will give us in some degree an assurance of the intentions of the Government regarding the establishment of responsible government in this country. We are now no more content with promises.

The illustrious authors of the Report themselves remark that "there is a belief abroad that assurances given in public pronouncements of policy are sometimes not fulfilled. I would say, not "sometimes" but "Seldom" fulfilled. The Morley-Minto Reforms were hailed by the whole country as ushering in a new era of political progress, but when they were brought into actual operation the bureaucratic framers of the rules and regulations succeeded in nullifying the liberal policy of Lords Morley and Minto. After our sad experience of the Reforms of 1909

our faith in promises and pledges stands much shaken today. Just as we are told to realise that India's political future is not to be won merely by fine phrases, so we ought to make it clear to Government that a whole fifth of the human race cannot be kept loyal to foreign rule by mere promises. The days of fine phrases and hollow promises have equally passed and if we are to be kept within the great British Empire, our confidence must be won, our affection must be secured. To the Secretary of State and the Viceroy we are grateful for the genuine desire their Report demonstrates for the political progress of our country, but to be perfectly frank, we are not without just apprehension that in much of their work their good intention will be frustrated by those to whom the carrying out of the policy will be entrusted in this country and it is for this reason that our demand for the Indian element in the Governor-General's Executive Council must be insistent on being half of the total strength.

The Provincial Government

In regard to the Provincial Governments we are more liberally treated than in the Government of India. The proposals start with two postulates :

(1) Complete responsibility for the Government cannot be given without inviting a break-down.

(2) Some responsibility must be given at once if the scheme stated in the proposals is to have any value.

These governing conditions are to be satisfied by a bifurcation of the functions of the Provincial Government into two branches, *viz.*, one subject to popular control are to be called "Transferred Subjects" and those in the hands of the officials are to be designated "Reserved Subjects." It follows, of course, from the above division that the Executive Government must also consist of two parts. The proposal is that one part is to comprise the head of the Province who will be known as Governor and an Executive Council of two Members, and the other is to consist of a Minister or Ministers, according to the num-

ber and importance of the transferred subjects, chosen by the Governor from amongst the elected members of the Legislative Council. It is gratifying to observe that the Secretary of State and the Viceroy have noticed the unreality that characterises the existing Councils, the cause of which they ascribe to be system of indirect elections. They consider that indirect system should be swept away to give place to direct election on a broad franchise. We welcome this real step towards reform but it is right to point out that the unreality of the existing councils has not been due so much to the indirect systems as to the rules framed under which the members of the Councils were permitted to work. When the Reforms of 1909 were inaugurated the defects of the indirect system were pointed out but we were told then, as we have been told so many times in regard to all progressive demands, that country was not fit for any better. While the indirect system was deliberately introduced, rules were also so framed as to reduce the usefulness of the members to zero. Now it is proposed that there shall be in each province an enlarged Legislative Council differing in size and composition from province to province with a substantial elected majority, elected by direct election on a broad franchise with much communal and special representation as may be necessary. The members' right to ask supplementary questions and to move resolutions is enlarged and concession is made that the resolutions on the budget, expect in so far as they trench on the reserved subjects, may be binding. So long as certain subjects remain reserved the policy of keeping them unaffected by the popular wish is in keeping with the principle on which the Central Government is to be based. It has, therefore, been found necessary in regard to the reserved subjects to institute a Grand Committee within the Provincial Legislative Council to serve the purposes for which the Council of State, is designed in the Central Government.

The illustrious authors of the Report say : "For the purpose of enabling the Provincial Government to get through its legislation on reserved subjects, we propose that the head of the Government should have power to certify that a Bill dealing with a reserved subject is a measure essential to the discharge

of his responsibility for the peace or tranquillity of the province or of any part thereof or for the discharge of his responsibility for the reserved subjects." The effect of such a certificate will be that, if no reference to the Central Government is made for their decision, the certified Bill will be automatically referred to a Grand Committee of the Council. Similar procedure is proposed for controlling non-official Bills, amendments and clauses. The Grand Committee is to consist of forty to fifty per cent of the total strength of the Council and comprise members partly elected to it by the elected members and partly nominated to it by the Governor who will have the power to nominate a bare majority, exclusive of himself. Of the members, so nominated, two-thirds may be officials. The procedure laid down for the passage of a certified Bill is through the Grand Committee and it seems to me that the Legislative Council has but a nominal place in it. Here again is the same spirit of distrust of the people as in the Constitution of the Central Government, though it has to be acknowledged that it is not so manifest. Talking of the politically-minded Indian the Report says :

"He has made a skillful and on the whole a moderate use of the opportunities which we have given him in the Legislative Councils of influencing Government and affecting the course of public business, and of recent years he has by his speeches and in the press done much to spread the idea of a united and self-respecting India amongst thousands who had no such conception in their minds." If that is so, then may we not ask to be a little more trusted in these great reforms ? I am alive to this that in the provincial administration a considerable advance upon the existing system is proposed and I believe that if the proposals are carried into effect the journey to self-government in provincial matters will be sure though long. No one amongst us wishes a breakdown and we would, as the party most interested, be ourselves most anxious to see the success of the reforms that promise us the Pisgah view of the Promised Land. It is not impatience in us, it is not any desire to force the pace, that makes us for greater rights and, therefore, greater duties in provincial administration. Our submission is that greater responsibility should be cast on us so that our training towards

self-government may be the earlier commenced in that proportion which may correspond to the magnitude of the work before us. No one can question the true objective of the Report. The realisation of responsible Government in provincial administration is the anxious care of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, but towards the attainment of that end are their proposals not lacking in bold courage ?

After all, our past does not justify so many safeguards in the reforms. There same safeguards in the hands of a "strong man" may be turned into effective weapons for the destruction of the reforms themselves. It is true that patriotic Commissions are suggested for the purpose of re-surveying the political situation in India and of re-adjusting the machinery to the new requirements from time to time and no doubt it would be within the province of the Commissions to investigate into the course of constitutional development in the country and a "strong man" will have the fear of his acts being examined and judgment passed thereon by a Commission that would derive its authority from Parliament itself. But it has to be borne in mind that these Commissions will be at distant intervals aud however much credit one may be disposed to give to them for their anxiety to make a thorough investigation, the lapses of the "strong man" are bound to escape scrutiny when time has dulled the directness of perception. Without referring to any particular "strong man", we naturally get apprehensive when we find an administrator of a province indulging in wholesale denunciation of the politically-minded Indian, as men engaged in sowing distrust and in propagating vile propaganda. The latest pronouncement of one such "strong man" is that such of us, as ask why these restrictions, reservations, safeguards, this machinery for saving the authority of the Government and why this distrust, are those that spend their time in spreading sinister influence over the people and he explains that it is not the mistrust of the people but the distrust of the sinister influence of those whom he calls the extremists that renders it necessary to include in the new constitution safeguards, restrictions and reservations. Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford may well piteously cry : "Save us from our friends." Throughout the Report on the

reforms no such suggestion for the distrust has been expressed by its illustrious authors and whatever distrust that is noticeable could be ascribed to cautious steps being war ranted by the want of experience of the Indian people in matters administrative; but this commentator on the Report, if his exposition be correct, rouses us to a just resentment. This same "strong man" talks of an unbridled and defamatory press when he of all persons ought to know that the press legislation in India, of all measures, has been the most destructive of legitimate public criticism and has secured for the "strong-man", as also even for the milder bureaucrat, an unimpeded passage to the fulfilment of his arbitrary will. It is such "strong men"—and this unfortunate land has many of this breed—against whom we, the people, require special measures of protection.

In the reserved subjects are included the important heads coming under maintenance of law and order, Civil Justice, Land Revenue, Industrial matters, business concerns and the like. The subjects proposed to be transferred to popular control are as numerous as those of the reserved class. I believe that the transferred subjects will afford to us sufficient opportunities of administrative training in the first few years to enable us to qualify ourselves for the transference of all the subjects to popular control. The objection to the scheme, as a whole lies, however, in the proposal that at the end of a period of five years the reserved subjects are not to come automatically under popular control but it will be open to the Central Government to hear applications from either the Provincial Government or the Provincial Council for the modification of the reserved and the transferred subject lists of the province, and it will be upon the recommendation of the Central Government that the Secretary of State is to approve the transfer of further subjects. While this method of devolution of power has the merit of providing the incentive to the peoples' representatives for earnest and statesman-like discharge of their duties, it has the demerit of withdrawing the stimulus that they would have if they were now assured that at the end of five years the responsibility of the entire provincial administration would · volve upon them. In the language of the Report itself, advance can only come through previous

failures and exereise of responsibility calls forth the capacity for it.

The financial arrangement provided for effecting the administration of the two branches of the Government appears to me to be exceedingly unsatisfactory. The first charge on provincial revenues will be the contribution to the Central Government and after that the reserved subjects will have priority in the matter of supply; the residue, after meeting the above charges, will be available to the Ministers for the purposes of the transferred subjects. The provision is made that if such residue is insufficient for their requirements the Ministers can suggest additional taxation within the schedule of permissible provincial taxation or outside the schedule by obtaining the sanction of the Government of India. The question of any fresh taxation will be decided by the Governor and the Ministers and the Executive Government as a whole will not bear the responsibility for the proposal. Considering that the Governor is not expected to refuse, ordinarily, assent to the proposals of the Ministers, it is apparent that the responsibility of a fresh taxation will in effect rest upon the Ministers.

It is admitted that the new developments which are to be anticipated will necessitate fresh taxation. Thus is comes to this that the odium, which is inseparable from a new levy, is to be borne by the Ministers alone, the sequel to which may be the engendering of a repugnance in the people against popular government. The responsiblility for administering transferred subjects will be the Minister's, while the power of deciding what part of the revenue shall be allotted for the discharge of that responsibility will be retained in official hands. The Legislative Council under the proposed constitution will be bound to submit to the proposals of the Governor-in-Council with regard to expenditure on reserved subjects and it is more than likely that the reaction of their disability in the matter of the reserved subjects will operate prejudicially on the Minister's proposals for new taxations for transferred subjects. The proposed arrangement, it strikes me, is unfair. It is giving to the popular side of the Government an unsatisfactory start. The collective responsi-

bility of the Executive Government in matters of fresh taxations is necessary for the success of the reforms. The obvious defects of the system proposed are so many that I think it is our duty to insist upon modifications that may insure to the transferred subjects a fairer and a more equitable treatment. It is worthy of note here that of the departments proposed to be transferred to popular control several are of vital importance to the progress of the country and they have been the most starved under official regime.

The duty of constructing them and developing them will devolve upon the people's representatives but without sufficient provision for them. The subjects of Education and Sanitation, involving as they do the building up of healthy mind and healthy body in the people, are of supreme importance as upon them will rest the creation of healthy electorates. If the franchise, on which responsible government is to be based, is to be broad and extensive, due provision has to be made from now to secure its expansiveness as time grows, and towards that end it will not do to treat those two subjects with stint.

As regards the appointment of Ministers, the Governor is to exercise his choice from among the elected members of the Legislative Council. They are to hold office for the life time of the Legislative Council. They will be members of the Executive Government but not of the Executive Council. The portfolios dealing with the transferred subjects are to be committed to them and in respect of those subjects they with the Governor will form the administration. No provision is made for the Ministers to resign if they lose the confidence of the House. Our proposal that Indian members of the Executive Government should be elected by the Council has been based on our experience that Government have in the past chosen men not because they were sound but because they were, according to bureaucratic view, safe.

This has been noticed by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford in their observation : "We are aware that in the past the nominations made to the executives have not always given satisfac-

tion. There has been a disposition to regard the men appointed as chosen because they are safe and not likely to give Government trouble; and if legislature and executive are to work smoothly together it is, we agree, necessary to make appointments which command confidence and insure efficiency and ability."

The election of Ministers is disapproved but no injunction is laid that the nominations should be of persons who had the confidence of the Legislative Council. The justification for our proposal of election lay in our apprehension arising out of bureaucratic methods. If we can be assured that really capable men will be chosen for appointment as colleagues of Governor our scheme of elected members of the Executive will not require to be pressed, for our demand is for capable men only. Our objection. however, to the irremovability of Ministers stands. It has been stated that it is not contemplated that from the outset the Governor should occupy the position of a purely constitutional Governor bound to accept the decisions of his Ministers. That may be so, but in that proposal I do not see any justification to give to the Ministers a place above the will of the representatives of the people. What we have to guard against is a too ready submission on the part of the Ministers to the wishes of the Governor. Under the constitution proposed, the Governor will occupy a predominant position, and if at any time he chooses to disapprove of a measure he should be made to take the responsibility of refusing his assent instead of securing by methods of powerful suasion the acquiescence of Ministers. The scheme if carried into effect will be demoralising for the Ministers themselves. Some method should be devised whereby the responsibility of the Ministers to the representatives of the people should not be diminished while their harmonious co-operation with the Governor may be maintained. I suggest that it be made incumbent upon every Minister on his appointment to seek re-election, failing which his appointment will automatically cease to operate. A further condition of his office should be that he should continue to enjoy the confidence of the House. Should the House, as a body, express its want of confidence in him he must resign his office as a matter of course. The suggestion that

I make does not in any way reduce the position of the Governor, nor his powers under the proposed constitution.

Dealing with the subject of Ministers I must refer to their exclusion from the Executive Council. While they are permitted a place in the Executive Government they are not wanted in the Executive Council. The reason of such exclusion seems to be their unconcern with the reserved subjects. Here again the distrust of the people in the proposed reforms raises its venomous head. Ample safeguards for the protection of the reserved subjects have been provided and the hands of the Governor have been more than strengthened by restrictions and reservations. I realise that the inclusion of the Ministers in the Executive Council is not free from danger to popular aspirations as such inclusion is more likely, than not, to create a natural bias in the mind of the Governor to choose a safe man as his Ministers, but I would sooner take that risk and hav the Ministers within the Executive Council than out of it. Whatever the underlying policy of two compartments of Government may be and whatever its justification, I am decidedly of the view that a total unconcern of the Ministers in the reserved subjects is not desirable, for the objective being the ultimate realisation of responsible government, the association of Ministers in some form or other with the administration of the reserved subjects will better prepare them for the ultimate devolution of power on the people. If expediency does not permit that they should have an effective voice in the Executive Council they should at least be given a place therein of more or less advisory character, as additional members. The constitution as proposed is open to the very serious objection that until actual transference takes place the people's representatives will have but little touch with subjects of the reserved class; while at some future date, and let us hope not a distant date, it is they that will be asked to assume charge of the administration of those subjects.

Another point in connection with the subject of Ministers is that of their dignity in the Executive Government. The Report says that the illustrious authors of it do not make any recom-

mendation in regard to Ministers' emoluments. This gives a faint idea that their salary may not be on the same scale as that of members of the Executive Council. I am not one to advocate expensive machinery of administration but when it comes to a distinction arising between Ministers of the people and Ministers not of the people I would sink all considerations of financial economy and insist on the Ministers enjoying the same salary as Members of the Executive Council. I consider it as affecting their dignity but if economy has to be effected it must be effected by reducing the salary of the Members of the Executive Council to the level of the salary that may be proposed for Ministers. In this connection I may be pardoned for referring to what will appear to be trivial, but my excuse is that the illustrious authors of the Report have concerned themselves with details of the honorific designation of members of the several legislative bodies. At present the advent of a member of an Executive Council, whether Provincial or Imperial, is attended with a noisy salute of guns that does no one any good. It is merely reminiscent of the age of vanity in which the bureaucrat lived and thrived. The days of catching the imagination of Indians by noise and din are passed and we have now learnt to appraise the value and worth of men by their work and not by their tinselled trappings. Let these salutes be discontinued and powder saved from unmeaning waste.

The proposal to appoint additional members of the Executive Council, if the Governor chooses, does not seem to me to be open to any serious objection as no portfolio is to be assigned to them and their functions will be merely consultative and advisory. So long as the additional members continue to discharge the functions of their substantive appointments and draw merely the pay attached to those appointments, and no burden of additional expenditure is thrown on the Province, the proposal may be regarded as harmless.

In respect of the Indian member of the Executive Council he is not to be elected, nor is the field of choice limited to the Legislative Council. The Governor will be free to recommend whom he wishes and to take into consideration the names of

persons who have won distinctions whether in the Legislative Council or any other field. I admit that if the Governor is sympathetic and broad minded and works with a view to the ultimate realisation of responsible government, chances are that his Indian nominee for the Executive Council will be a person acceptable to the people but the satisfactoriness of a nomination becomes conditioned on the tendencies of an individual and the fear may well be entertained that with the varying temperaments of individual Governors the search for a safe man may become common. Our proposal for the election of Indian Executive Councillors is no doubt open to certain objections but in the existing state of things if the Indian people are to be assured that the Indian element in the Executive Council will be truly Indian in aspiration there seems to be no other method but that of election whereby such an assurance can be given. It may be said that an Indian Executive Councillor holding his office by election may not work as harmoniously with his colleagues as one who holds his office by nomination As we have not suggested that the elected Indian member should be removable at the will of the Legislative Council and his appointment being permanent for five years there is no reason to apprehend that he will indulge in unwarranted friction with his colleagues. What we want is that the Indian member in the Provincial Executive Council should be one to possess courage to present the Indian view of a question faithfully. If the nominations, in the past, in the Provincial Executive Councils had been as satisfactory as, happily, the nominations have been in the Governor-General's Executive Council, our apprehension regarding the search for a safe man would never have come to exist.

Minorities

Upon the subject of the representation of the minorities the Congress-League scheme provides special electorates for Musalmans for their representation in fixed proportions, varying according to several Provinces, while for the other minorities it proposes separate representation but not separate electorates. The proportions for Musalman representation were fixed after a discussion between the League and ourselves. This has given

occasion to an observation in the Report that the compact shows the pressure under which the agreement was reached. Continuing in the same strain the illustrious authors of the Report remark that the provision in our scheme concerning the discussion of measures affecting either community to proceed by leave of its representatives, measures the distance that separates the one from the other. The system of "divide and rule" is an acknowledged method in most alien Governments and it is nothing surprising if for the time being a feeling has existed between the two great communities of India that in some respects each has a special interest of its own but are not the signs of fusion abundantly present ? While the Report dwells on "the difficulty with which the agreement between the two communities was reached" it fails to take notice of the lesson the agreement inculcates that those that had been artificially parted have at last come to realise that a common motherland binds them together and in the unity of action they have commenced to see that natural ties, established by an all-wise Providence, cannot be torn asunder in spite of seductive arts. Is there not in the reunion of the Hindu and Musalman a prophecy of the future ?

The Musalman has in certain Provinces asked for more than his proportionate share and we of the Congress have ungrudgingly yieded to his wish. Yet has not the Musalman, in Provinces where numerically he has the preponderance of population, of his own free will agreed to a lesser proportion of representation ? Does this not show that whatever differences artifice had created have been, by the union of hearts and the conception of common interest, wiped out ? But let us look into the proposal of the Report. The authors say that they are bound to reserve their approval of the proportions until they have ascertained what their effect will be upon other interests. While the above observation is made the Report proceeds that it welcomes the assent of the Muslim League that the Musalmans are not to participate in the general electorate when a separate electorate is accorded to them. I believe that the assent of the League was given on the basis of the proportions agreed upon between us and them and I am informed that they take objection to Mr.

Montagu and Lord Chelmsford interfering with the arrangement made between the two representative bodies of the country. As a criticism on the subject of representation of minorities I do not desire to do more than quote from the Report itself: "The British Government is often accused of dividing men in order to govern them. But if it unnecessarily divides them at the very moment when it professes to start them on the road to governing themselves it will find it difficult to meet the charge of being hypocritical or short-sighted." I trust that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford are not conscious that the reservation that they have made in regard to Musalman representation is liable to be construed into a policy of "divide and rule."

Fiscal Policy

The fiscal policy concerning India has not been stated in any detail by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford. They say that connected intimately with the matter of industries is the question of the Indian tariff. No one can doubt the defect of the existing fiscal policy so far as the interest of India is concerned. The subject is obviously excluded from discussion as it has been thought undesirable at this juncture to raise any question of the modification of the fiscal policy. The illustrious authors of the Report say that they have no immediate proposals to make but they are anxious that any decision which may hereafter be taken should be taken with full appreciation of educated Indian opinion. We have through our representatives in the Indian Legislative Council, by our speeches from public platforms and by the medium of the press, expressed the Indian desire for a protective tariff.

With growing expenditure on administration and expanding individual needs we look to protective tariff as a means of bringing relief. We believe that if industries are to be nurtured tariff must be adopted. We are told that our belief is wrong but so long as our error in calculation is not demonstrated our faith in protective tariff will remain. Our desire for fiscal autonomy is not based upon any hostility to British interest. No doubt the extent of Indian gain will mean a corresponding

loss to the British merchant but in the larger economy of the Empire a strong and prosperous India is of much greater value than mere commercial gain to Great Britain. The need to strengthen the Empire is demonstrated by the present war and the necessity for the strengthening of every unit of the Empire is now beyond question. I do not think any one will dispute the statement that in the past Indian commercial interest was subordinated to British interests, but with a more spacious view of the Empire we expect greater attentión to be paid to what will conduce to the prosperity of the country. Much of the political situation in India is due to economic forces that have been silently but surely working. It has often been said that foreign capital, which means British capital, has done much for the development of Indian resources. That is true if the development of resources as an abstract idea, detached from actual benefit, were regarded as a title of the British capitalist to the gratitude of the Indian people.

The question is has the kind of development, that we have had, brought to the Indian the prosperity that he wants. The Indian has merely been the producer of raw materials for the benefit of British manufacturers who have purchased the materials from him at low prices and sold the manufactured articles to him at high prices. Industrially we have been left so utterly untrained that we have not been able to free ourselves from the importation of foreign manufacturers, while the export of raw materials has continued on an ascending scale. Frankly stated our conviction has been that our industrial backwardness has been positively encouraged in the interest of British manufacturers. This conviction is not based upon a mere prejudice that one race may have against another, but it is based upon facts of history dating from the time when the commercial development of the country was fostered by the Company as a matter of business. The tradition of the Company inherited by the Government under the Crown, we believe, have not been departed from and British commercial interests have had the same fostering care as in the days of the Company. The maintenance of the duty on cotton goods manufactured in the country has been unquestionably in the interest of

Lancashire. The need for industrial development has been felt by us for a long time and it is at our solicitation that the Government now seems to be cognisant of it We are glad to note that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford are agreed that if the resources of the country are to be developed the Government must take action. We have long urged that the Government ought to be alive to their responsibility for the industrial development of the country; we have been crying for scientific institutes and technical institutions; we have urged upon their attention the examples of Germany and Japan. Have the Government up to now responded to our call with that depth of sympathy that the circumstances demanded? The death of technical institutions in the country testifies to the correctness of the charge that the Government, contrary to their duty, are indifferent to our industrial growth. Until the Government come forward as guide and helper the charge will stand and we would be entitled to entertain the belief, as indeed at present we do, that in the policy of the Government the interest of India is but merely secondary.

The political consequences of such a belief can be easily imagined, for no Government can afford to allow the impression to prevail and to spread that the ruled are being "bled white" for the profit of the rulers. The whole subject has been comprehensively put by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford in language that is impossible to be excelled. They say : "After the war the need for industrial development will be all the greater unless India is to become a mere dumping-ground for the manufactures of foreign nations which will then be competing all the more keenly for the markets on which their political strength so perceptibly depends. India will certainly consider herself entitled to claim all the help that her Government can give her to enable her to take her place as a manufacturing country; and unless the claim is admitted it will surely turn into an insistent request for a tariff which will penalise imported articles without respect of origin. On all grounds a forward policy in industrial development is urgently called for not merely to give India economic stability; but in order to satisfy the aspirations of her people who desire to see her stand before the

world as a well-poised, up-to-date country; in order to provide an outlet for the energies of her youngmen who are otherwise drawn exclusively to Government service or a few over-stocked professions; in order that money now lying unproductive may be applied to the benefit of the whole community and in order that the too speculative and literary tendencies of Indian thought may be bent to more practical ends, and the people may be better qualified to shoulder the new responsibilities which the new constitution will lay upon them.

The Public Services

So far I have dealt with the proposals that come under that part of the announcement of the 20th August that relates to the gradual development of self-governing institutions. I now take up that part of the announcement that declares the policy to the increasing association of Indians in the administration.

The subject is of sufficient importance to have been accorded the first place in the declaration of policy. Happily the proposals of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford neutralise the effect of the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1912. The report of the Commission was unsatisfctory enough even for the time when it was prepared and it would be much more so now under present changed conditions, when volcanic events have caused an upheaval in our modes of thought. The report on the reforms as a whole bears tesimony to the liberal and sympathetic inclination of its authors in treating Indian questions and we welcome their observation, in dealing with the subject of the public services, that an entirely new policy towards the Indian Government has been adopted which must be very largely dependent for success on the extent to which it is found possible to introduce Indians into every branch of the administration.

The declaration of policy of His Majesty's Government ushers in a new era in the destiny of India and if that policy is worked out in its integrity, until responsible Govrnment is established, within a reasonable period of time, the discontent

that stalks the land will not have disappeared. The two great changes that the Secretary of State and the Viceroy—propose in respect of the public services are, (1) the removal of all racial bars, and (2) recruitment in India and England for services for which recruitment in England only is permitted at present. These charges will be a concession to the Indian demand that has been voiced from the Congress ever since its birth. It will not serve any useful purpose to refer to the past history of the exclusion of Indians from the superior services. The declaration of policy gives us a hope for the future and we are now concerned more with what the services are going to be than what they have been. No one minimises the record of the Indian Civil Service. From its inception that service has comprised earnest and ardent workers of Great Britain and the Indian Empire of today is a production of Great Britain in which they have had a considerable, if not the main pain. Judged from our point of view their labours have not been altruistic, but incidentally while they have worked for their own country, they have helped us to ideas of freedom and liberty, of nationhood and political rights, which I treat as acquisitions of the greatest value for the up-building of that India which is our dream today and we hope will be our realisation tomorrow. No question of gratitude arises in this as we have paid heavily for what we have received. It would be unjust to construe our demand for a larger share in the services as denoting any hostility towards the members of the services. The changes proposed in respect of the Public Services are merely steps towards the restitution of our rights and it is a gratifying feature of the changes that in the future there is to be between the official and the non-official more of partnership and less of dictation. The Royal Commission of 1912 had recommended that 25 per cent of the superior posts of the Indian Civil Service should be recruited for in India bur Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have raised the proportion to 33 per cent and this percentage is to be increased by 1.5 per cent annually until the periodic Commission is appointed which will re-examine the whole subject. This means that if the periodic Commission comes at the end of 12 years the proportion of recruitment in India at the

time will be a little more than 50 per cent. The method proposed is ascending. Our complaint that we have been shut out from practical experience of the problems of administration is acknowledged and it is towards the remedying of that defect that racial bars are to be removed and recruitment in India is desired. I for my part welcome the proposed changes for they, while assuring to us our purpose, do not carry with them the dangers of abruptness.

The Army

The policy concerning admission of Indians into Military Service has been enunciated by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford in a spirit of sympathy towards Indian aspirations. The refusal to provide military training to the Indian people justly laid the Government open to the charge that their motive was to keep the Indian down in order to rule them. It is gratifying to note that the angle of view on Indian questions is changed and the policy of keeping India in a state of degrading subjection by emasculation of her people is altered. The promise of King's Commissions to Indians is a happy augury of the good time to come.

The Non-Official British Community

We have no quarrel with the non-official British community, nor do we desire to have any Under the changed conditions if responsible Government is really established in the land our attitude towards them should be of cordial friendliness for, whatever conflict there may be between interest of individuals, it would be in the higher interests of India that the co-operation of all inhabiting the land must be sought and secured. Towards the Anglo-Indian community our attitude must be equally friendly. Their position is peculiar in the economy of India and when a Government resting on the wishes of the people comes to be established the duty of protecting small communities will devolve upon those that are numerically superior. I am looking forward to the day when the Anglo-Indian community will feel that its interests are not different from the interests of the Indians and will drop that aloofness from us which unfortunately at present characterises its attitude.

We are asking for a free India and a necessary condition of such an India is the blending together of the large and small communities into one united nation. The unification of all interests is the task before us and lovers of the country no doubt realise that this is not the time, nor the occasion, to quarrel amongst ourselves. Those that are not in the fold must be brought into it.

On the subject of social relations Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have given to all parties words of advice that we may all well take to heart. It would be useful to quote here the words of the illustrious authors of the report. "If there are Indians who really desire to see Indians have the Empire, to get rid of English officers and English commerce, we believe that among their springs of actions will be found the bitterness of feeling that has been nurtured out of some manifestation that the Englishman does not think the Indian an equal. Very small seeds casually thrown may result in great harvests of political calamity. We feel that particularly at the present stage of India's progress, it is the plain duty of every Englishman and woman, official and non-official, in India to avoid the offence and the blunder of discourtesy; and none the less is it incumbent on the educated Indian to cultivate patience and a more generous view of what may very likely be no more than heedlessness or difference of custom."

Conditions of the Problem

Leaving aside the historical survey of the past, facts have to be faced whether by British statesmen or by us. Macaulay has said : "Of all forms of tyranny I believe that the worst is that of a nation over a nation" and "the heaviest of all yokes is the yoke of the stranger." That is as true now as in the days of Macaulay and his observation applies as much to India as to any other country. To deny that India feels the yoke of the stranger is to shut one's eyes to fundamental facts. The apologists of British rule in India have asserted that the presence of the British in this land has been due to humane motives; that British object has been to save the people from themselves, to raise

their moral standard, to bring them material prosperity, to confer on them the civilising influences of Europe, and so forth and so on. These are hypocricies common to most apologists.

The fact is that the East India Campany was not conceived for the benefit of India but to take away her wealth for the benefit of Britain. The greed of wealth that characterised its doings was accompanied by greed for territorial possession and when the transference of rule from the Company to the Crown took place, the greed of wealth and lust of power abated not one jolt in the inheritors, the only difference being that tyranny became systematised and plunder became scientific. The people know it, they feel it, and they are asking for a reparation for the incidents of the past. If, as in the language of Mr. Asquith, the Empire is to be for us worth living in as well as worth dying for, that reparation must be made. The plea to resist our demand, is put forward by short-sighted people that India is not yet educationally fit. They ignore the fact that it is not in literacy that the knowledge of one's rights lies but in that intuitive capacity which is God's gift to all races. We are told that the educated Indian is removed from the masses and between them there is no bond of sympathy to unite them to a common purpose ; that the educated Indian is not capable of representing his less fortunate brethern; that the interest of the uneducated classes can be best administered by the British officials. The charges against us are unjust calumnies and the claims of the bureaucrat to represent the masses are arrogant assumptions.

After more than a hundred years of uncontrolled sway over India the British administration in this country is not able to show a greater result in the spread of literacy than about six per cent of the population. Those that have kept the people in the darkness of ignorance are the very people who lay claim to the entrustment of the people's interest to them. It is we who have been crying for more education and it is they that have been trying to retard mass education. It was our representative Gopal Krishna Gokhale that introdued the Primary Education Bill and it was the bureaucrat that threw it out. It is we who have been trying to broaden the political basis and it is they who are trying to narrow it down. The interests of the

rulers and the ruled have been not only apart but widely divergent. To the advocates of the patriachal system of sheltered existence we raise our warning finger to point out the importance of facing facts. For India to remain within the Empire she must be freed from an unwholesome tutelage and unless she is accorded a place of honour and dignity along side the self-governing unit of the Empire, what is now a source of profit will assuredly turn into a source of peril. The present war has revealed the importance of cohesion, and unless that cohesion meant to India per uplift, it is idle to expect her to work for an Empire in which her position is base and degrading. The sense of the unity of sentiment and consciousness of the identity of interest that now pervade all classes cannot now be checked and Indian progress cannot any more be resisted, and wise statesmanship dictates that in dealing with India Great Britain should adopt the noble policy of helping India to rise to the full stature and dignity of a self-governing member of the British Empire.

Brother delegate, I have in this address to your purposely refrained from indulging in generalities, for I felt that I could more usefully engage your attention with the consideration of the reform proposals than abstract discussion of political philosophy, I have not dealt with every detail of the reforms but I have tried to touch upon, in brief, the more important of the proposals. The subject itself is vast, the atmosphere in which it has to be discussed had to be calm, heat has to be avoided, rhetoric has to give place to sound reasoning. To my countrymen I say "press your demands forcefully and insistently and if you are not heard now, your cause being righteous you will prevail in the end." And to the great British nation I command the warning words of their great liberal statesman, Lord Morley: "If imperialism means your own demoralisation, if it means lowering your own standard of civilisation and humanity, then in the name of all you hold precious, beware of it."

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CLAIM FOR DOMINION STATUS*

Mr. Chairman, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the honour you have done me in inviting me to preside over this great assembly. As has often been said the Presidentship of the Congress is the highest honour which the people of this country can bestow upon any one. It is doubly so when it is conferred a second time. This honour is enhanced in the present instance by the fact that you have been pleased to call upon me to guide the deliberations of our great national assembly at a time when momentous events which affect India as well as the rest of the civilised world are taking place, and when questions of the most for-reaching importance, which have a direct and immediate bearing on our future, are to be considered by the Congress. I am most deeply grateful to you for this signal mark of your confidence in me. I am also grateful to my esteemed friend Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar, whom I so much miss in the Imperial Legislative Council where his unyielding independence and incisive logic made him a source of great strength to the people's cause, for having retired in my favour because his selfless anxiety for the country's cause, and his partiality for an old friend, led him to think that my election would serve that cause better at this particular juncture. I sincerely wish I could feel that I deserved all this honour and confidence. I pray to God that with your generous help I may prove not unworthy of it, and that our deliberations may be such as will rebound to our credit and the honour and advancement of our country.

The importance of this session of the Congress does not

*Presidential address delivered by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya at the Delhi Congress held on 26-31 December, 1918.

need to be emphasised. We meet today in this ancient capital of the Indian Empire, hoary with all its historic traditions and associations. It irresistibly brings to our minds a crowd of thoughts. happy and the reverse, of glories and the vicissitudes which our ancient land has undergone. The impulse to dwell upon them is strong, but I will not do so at this place. I will dwell here rather upon the living present. We are meeting at a time when the civilised world is celebrating the happy end of the greatest and bloodiest war known to history. That the end was announced in a memorable utterance by the distinguished Premier of England when, addressing the people of Britain, he said :

"You are entiled to rejoice, people of Britain, that the Allies, the Dominions and India have won a glorious victory. It is the most wonderful victory for liberty in the history of the world."

You, too, my countrymen, are entitled to rejoice as you have actually been rejoicing, that this great victory has been won. You are also entitled to feel justly proud that our country has played a noble part in this great war, and made a magnificent contribution to its glorious end. As His Excellency the Viceroy very well said the other day :

"She was early in the field helping to stem the rush of Teutonic hordes and she has been in at the end, and, her troops largely contributed to the staggering blow in Palestine which first cause our foe to totter to his fall."

India had many grievances against England when the war broke out. But she had not lost faith in the Briton's love of justice and liberty. And the moment the message of His Majesty the King of England and Emperor of India was received, announcing that he had been compelled to draw the sword in defence of liberty and of treaty rights and obligations, India loyally put aside her grievances, buried her differences, and her princes and people readily identified themselves with the cause which England has taken up because it was the cause of fairness and liberty. Both our national traditions and our national aspirations predisposed us to that attitude. In days long past,

the memory of which is still cherished, our ancestors had waged the greatest war recorded in our history—the Mahabharata—and sacrificed the entire manhood of the nation to establish "the triumph of righteousness". And for thirty years we had been carrying on a constitutional agitation to obtain some measure of power to administer our own affairs. Consequently all classes and communities of our people enthusiastically united in giving an assurance of unswerving loyalty and unflinching support to His Majesty the King-Emperor in the prosecution of war to a successful end.

The ruling princes and the people of India made what His Majesty was pleased lovingly to describe in his gracious message of September 14, 1914, as 'prodigal offers of their lives and treasure in the cause of the realm'. Let us thank God that our deeds have been as good as our word. We have helped to the full extent of the demand made upon us, and more, in men, money and material. Both our honoured ruling princes and our peasants have contributed their quota of service to the war, and both have made money contributions in numerous instances beyond their means. From the day His Majesty's message was received, India urged with one voice that her valiant soldiers should be sent to France to be in the forefront of the conflict. Our late Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, who trusted the Indians and who was trusted of them, appreciated our proposals and with the foresight and courage that distinguished him, he despatched Indian troops to France. Both India and the Allies owe him gratitude for this act of statesmanship. Our troops saved the situation in France in 1914 and covered themselves with the glory. The full value of the contributions of the princes and people of India in money and resources remains to be calculated. But we know that it amounts to over two hundred millions, or three hundred crores. As regards our contributions in men, the Secretary of State for India stated the other day in Parliament that 1,161,789 Indians had been recruited since the war began and 1,215,338 men had been sent overseas from India, and that of those 101,439 had become casualities. These are contributions of which we have every reason to be proud. More proud are we of the fact that throughout all these four

years of trial and tribulation, in the face of the extreme suffering which the war inflicted upon our people, and even when the sky seemed to be much overcast, India remained unshaken equally in her loyalty to the King-Emperor and in her resolve to do her utmost to help the Empire till the end. This is particularly noteworthy in the case of our Musalman brethren. Every one knows how deep are their religious sentiments towards Turkey, and how profound their concern in everything that affects her. When, therefore, unfortunately, Turkey was persuaded by the Central powers to join them against our King-Emperor and his Allies, the feelings of our Mohammedan brethren were put to the sorest test.

No thoughtful Mohammedan could be indifferent to the fate which might overtake Turkey. But it must today be a source of the sincerest satisfaction to every Indian Mohammedan who loves his country and community, that the community did not at any time allow its religious sentiments to overpower its sense of duty to the King and to the motherland, and that it remained firm in its support for the cause of the Empire. This is a fact of great moment in the history of our country. It is a matter for sincere thankfulness and congratulations to all our fellow-subjects and ourselves.

Before we proceed further, let me ask you, men and women of all faiths, whom it is my privilege at this moment to address, and who worship our one common God under different names and in diverse ways, to join in offering Him our humble and profound thanks that the war has come to a happy end, and in paying that it may prove to be the precursor of a lasting, just and universal peace. Let me next, on your behalf and on mine, offer our loyal greetings and dutiful congratulations to His Majesty the King-Emperor on the happy termination of the war.

It gives us Indians particular satisfaction to think that while the despotic monarchs of other lands have disappeared, our noble King-Emperor, exercising his beneficent power in consonance with the constitution of the country and the will of his people, sit even more firm in the affections of the people than

before. We also offer our cordial congratulations to our fellow subjects of Britain, and their sturdy children in the dominions overseas, on the glorious result of their great efforts and sacrifices in the cause of liberty and right. If England had not joined the war and thrown her whole strength and resources into the fight, like Belgium, France would long ago have been compelled to give up the fight, and Germany's ambitions would have been realised. Great have been the sacrifices England has made.

But greater therefore is the glory she has won I am sure you also wish to offer your cordial congratulations to the noble people of France, who have won imperishable glory by sustaining the most splendid fight against tremendous odds in defence of their great land of liberty, equality and fraternity. We watched their struggle with the deepest sympathy and with the sincerest admiration; and it is matter of particular pride and gratification to us to think that our Indian Expeditionary Force was able to reach France in the nick of time to be of help to them and to save the cause both of the Allies and of civilisation in the fearful struggle of 1914-15. Lastly, we must offer our thanks and congratulations to the great people of America whose unselfish entry into the war, involving the tremendous sacrifice of men and money it did, was the finest tribute to the righteous character of the war which the Allies had been waging, as well as the greatest contribution to the cause of liberty and justice. Humanity owes a deep debt of gratitude to America for the decisive part which she has played under the wise and firm guidance of its noble President in the overthrow of German militarism. Adopting the words of the President :

"We must all thank God with the deepest gratitude that the Americans came into the lines of battle just at the critical moment when the whole fate of the world seemed to hang in the balance, and threw their fresh strength into the ranks of freedom in time to turn the whole tide and sweep off the fateful struggle." It is our privilege and our pride to send our congratulations to the people of those great nations because our soldiers fought on the same side with them on the battlefields of

France and Flanders, and thereby established between them and us a comradeship in a righteous cause which we fervently hope will be the basis of lasting friendship between us.

The Hand of Providence in the War

Ladies and gentlemen, to my mind the hand of Providence is clearly discernible both in the development of this war and its determination. The world, and particularly the European world, needed a correction and a change. It had been too much given up to materialism and had been too much estrangled from spiritual considerations. It had flouted the principle that righteousness exalteth a nation. In spite of the vaunted civilisation of Europe, some of its nations have been living in a state of international anarchy and their relations to one another and to the outer world turned upon force. They have been dominated by an overpowering passion for wealth and power, and in their mad pursuit of it have trampled upon the rights and liberties of weaker states and peoples. Spain, Austria, and France each sought the mastesy of Europe in the past. Germany attempted it this time. England has not, since the fifteenth century, attacked the independence of any European State, but has befriended them when they have been threatened by their more powerful neighbours. But she too has followed a different policy in Asia and Africa. During the last half century only, she has waged wars to annex Egypt, the Sudan, the South Africa Republics, and Burma, besides several other minor wars. There have been great quarrels among the nations of Europe about markets and colonial possessions. There have been contentions between France and Germany for the control of Morocco, between Russia and Austria for the control of the Balkans, between Germany and other powers for the control of Turkey. These great rivalries among them have led them to live in constant fear of war, and ever to keep themselves prepared for it. The earth has been groaning under the burden of big battalions and armaments. There have been treaties and alliances, but they were entered into to keep up the balance of power among them. The determining factor in international relations has been force. Any nation which wished to attack another could do so with

impunity if it made itself superior to that other in brute force. England had, by a long course of events, grained the highest postion and power among the nations of Europe. She naturally wanted to maintain it at all costs. Her younger sister Germany became jealous of her and was fired with the ambition to outshine her. For decade past she pursued a systematic policy of national development—military, naval, industries, economic—with the object of striking a blow for world-power. She converted a whole nation into a wonderfully well-organised disciplined, and equipped army.

It is difficult to imagine how any nation can prepare itself better to carry everything before it by force than did Germany. She wantonly broke the peace of the world when she thought it was most advantageous for her to do so. Her force was strengthened by the forces of her stubborn allies. On the other side were arrayed the forces of the Allies—English, French, Russian, Italian, the people of the dominions and of India. It is difficult to imagine a stronger array of forces on e ther side than there actually was in this war. If diplomacy had not led Russia to fail the Allies, they might probably have succeeded earlier. But the purpose of the war would not have been served in that way. The war therefore went on its grim horror. A few months before the termination of hostilities it seemed as if the Germans were going to succeed. The hearts of France and England and the rest of the allied world trembled with fear that in spite of all the combined efforts of the Allies and all the sacrifices which they had undergone for four years, the Germans were going to succeed in their wicked ambition. But they were not to succeed because they were in the wrong. Providence had declared that the Allies should succeed because they were in the right. But Providence did not yet bless their efforts, for they had still to learn that the laws of Karma are inexorable, that

'Our acts our angles are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.'

Many of the Allies also had too often in the past acted on the evil principle that might is right, and not all of them perhaps

were yet prepared to act in their dealings, with all nations and peoples on the principle that right is might.

At the special Service of penitence and humble prayer held on the third anniversary of the war, the high-souled Lord Bishop of Calcutta dwelt upon the fact that time and again the Allies had been held back from victory by circumstances which were not or could not be expected. And His Lordship said :

"What was God saying all this while to our nation and Empire ? 'you must change, you must change. before I can give you victory.' You must change, is addressed to the nation as a whole and to all individuals of it. The United States of America joined with us, and their adhesion makes the continuation of the war certain. Thus our nation is granted another chance to change itself. The same divine demand is reiterated; 'you must change before I can give you victory'."

It was the evident purpose of Providence that the powerful nations of the world should undergo a moral rebirth and not only that this war should re-establish the principle that right is might, but that international anarchy should be ended and the warring nations of the world should agree to establish a moral order and a permanent arrangement among them to ensure just and fair dealings with one another and the rest of the human family in the future. For the accomplishment of this purpose it was necessary that the war should not end until America joined it and until the nations agreed to the peace proposals which were to be the basis of this order. It was therefore only when they had so agreed that Providence enabled America to come in at the critical moment to help the Allies and to turn the scale against Germany.

This is not a matter of mere influence and argument. President Wilson has distinctly said that America did not come into the war merely to win it. As he put it, she came in to be "instrumental in establishing peace secure against the violence of irresponsible monarchs and the ambitions of military coteries and make ready for a new order, for new foundations of justice and fair dealing."

"We are about to give order and organisation," said the great American who has evidently been appointed by God to be the master mason in building the new temple of international justice.

We are about to give order and organisation to the peace not only for ourselves but for other people of the world as well, as far as they will suffer us to serve them. It is international justice we seek, not domestic safety.

He had outlined the basis of peace. The allied Government had accepted his proposals at once; the Central Powers when they could not help doing it. And he is now at the Conference at Paris to help in the settlement of peace. As he recently said :

"Peace settlements which are now to be agreed upon are of transcendant importance to us and to the rest of the world. The gallant men of our forces on land and sea have consciously fought for the ideals of their country. I have sought to express these ideals and they have been accepted by statesmen as substance of their own thought and purpose. As the Associated Governments have accepted them, I owe it to them to see to it so far as in me lies that no false or mistaken interpretation is put upon them, and no possible effort omitted to realise them. It is now my duty to play my full part in making good what they offered their lives and blood to obtain."

The Ideals of America

Now what are the ideals that America has fought for ? President Wilson stated them in the clearest terms in his memorable address to Congress on the 9th of January last. It is necessary to recall them to mind. He said :

"The way of conquest and aggrandisement and secret understanding is past. We entered the war in consequence of the violations of right which touched us to the quick and made our life impossible unless they were corrected and we would be secure against their recurrence. We therefore demand that the world should be made safe and fit to live in. All peoples of the

world are in effect partners in this interest. Therefore the programme of the world's peace is our programme."

He then enumerated his now famoas fourteen points. Briefly these were :

(1) Open covenants of peace openly arrived at without any secret diplomacy; (2) the freedom of the seas subject to certain international conditions; (3) removal of all economic barriers and equality of trade conditions among all people consenting to the peace and associating for its maintenance; (4) national armaments to be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety; (5) free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims based on the strict observancce of the principle that in determining such questions the sovereignty and interest of the populations concerned must have equal weight with equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined; (6) the evacuation of all Russian territory and the securing to her of unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for independent determination of her own political development and national policy; (7) the evacuation of Belgium and the complete restoration of her sovereignty; (8) the evacuation of all occupied French territories and the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine; (9) the adjustment of the frontiers of Italy along clearly recognisable lines of nationality; (10) securing to Austria-Hungary opportunities for autonomous development; (11) the settlement of the disputes of the Balkan States by mutual agreement and international guarantee of their political and economic independence and territorial integrity; (12) securing sovereignty to Turkey over the Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire, but assuming security of life and autonomous development to other nationalities now under Turkish rule; (13) the creation of an independent Polish State with international guarantee of political and economic independence and territorial integrity; and (14) the formation of a general association of nations under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity for great and small states alike.

President Wilson concluded his message to Congress with

the following summary of the ideals of America :

"An evident principle runs through the whole programme I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another. Unless this principle be made its foundation, no part of the structure of international justice can stand. The people of the United States could act upon no other principle; and in vindication of this principle they are ready to devote their lives and honour and everything they possess. The moral climax of this culminating war for human liberty has come, and they are ready to put their own strength, their own highest purpose, their own integrity and devotion to the test."

These noble sentiments are worthy of the great people of America and, I am sure, they have filled all lovers of right and liberty with gratitude and the hope of a better world. There have been attempts made before this to have international disputes settled by arbitration. There have been organisations made for preventing wars and preserving peace among nations. But never before in the history of the world has there been such a great attempt at establishing new foundations of justice and fair dealings among the nations of the earth and at forming a worldwide organisation to carry out the scheme. The great war was needed to bring this about. The fact that three such liberty-loving nations as Great Britain, France and America are united in purpose to give effect to these proposals, and that Germany, Russia and all the other nations concerned have accepted them, is a matter for most sincere thanks-giving and congratulation. If the proposals are carried out, as we must all hope and pray they will be, they will go far to establish a reign of righteousness among nations and usher a new era of peace on earth and goods will among men. If this comes about, enormous sacrifices of life and treasure which the war has entailed will have been made to good purpose. I am sure, my countrymen, that you who are the inheritors of great spiritual civilisations, most heartily and reverently welcome these proposals and that you will be willing to undergo any sacrifices to give them your cordial support. I would suggest that as representatives of one-fifth of the human race and of this great and ancient land, we should send to the

gentlemen who are engaged in this holy task at Paris, out respectful good wishes and our fervent prayers for the success of their noble undertaking. I venture to suggest that we may also convey to them an humble expsession of our willingness to coutribute whatever lies in our power to the success of the scheme. We may assure them that thousands of our young men will gladly and gratefully enrol as Soldiers of God in any international organisation that may be formed to support the proposed League of Nations.

India and the Peace Conference

You will remember, ladies and gentlemen, that when speaking of our contributions to the war, Mr. Lloyd George had promised that India's necessities would not be forgotten when the Peace Conference would be reached. We are thankful to him and to the British Cabinet generally for having recognised the justice of India's claim to be represented at the Conference. We are also thankful that the Government have appointed an Indian—our distinguished countryman Sir S P. Sinha—to represent her at the Conference. But he has been appointed by the Government of India without any reference to the public. As he has been so appointed, presumably he will represent at the Conference views which are in consonance with the views of that Government. It may be that those views will be in agreement with the views of Indian public, or it may not be so. We do not know what are the conditions under which Sir S.P. Sinha has been appointed, or what instructions the Government of India have given him. Unfortunately, the Government of India are not yet responsible to the Indian public; and, as matters stand, there often is a great divergence of views between them and the public of India. This being so, one may be allowed to say, without any reflection against my esteemed friend Sir S.P. Sinha and without forgetting how much he has by his character and talents contributed to the cause of Indian progress, that it would have been more in consonance with the spirit and aim of the Conference, and also in keeping with the proposals of constitutional reform which contemplate the appointment of ministers from among the elected members of the Councils, if the Government had seen their

way to ask the Congress and the Muslim League which they knew were going to meet here this week, or the elected members of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, to recommend an Indian or Indians for appointment by the Government as India's representatives at the Conference. In view of the fact that Canada is going to have as many as six representatives, it need not have been apprehended that a request that India should be allowed to have more than one representative would be regarded as unreasonable. There is a widespread opinion in the country that something like this should have been done. This view is not urged because of any delusion that the proposals for constitutional reform relating to India will be discussed at the Peace Conference. I suppose everyone understands that they will be discussed in the British Parliament. But it is urged because of the belief that the principles, and even some of the concrete proposals which will be discussed and settled at the Peace Conference, will have a great, direct and indirect, bearing on the interests of our country. This cannot be disputed. If it were not so, there would have been little meaning in appointing as an Indian to represent "India's necessities" at the Peace Conference. I am glad that His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner will be there to represent the views of the Indian States and Ruling Princes, whose steadfast loyalty to and support of the King-Emperor during this war has been of ten times greater value than their liberal contributions in men and money alone. But it will remain a matter for regret that British India will not be represented at this great Conference by a person appointed by the Government on the recommendation of the elected representatives of the people.

India's Position

India, ladies and gentlemen, occupies at present an anomalous and unhappy position. The people of India—Hindus, Muslim, Parsis and Christians—are the inheritors of great and ancient civilisation. About a hundred and fifty years ago, the whole of India was under the rule of Indians. At that time she was passing through one of these periods of decay and internal disorder which are not unknown in the history of other

nations. By an extraordinary combination of circumstances, which had their origin in the conditions then prevailling, India came to be placed under the rule of a people living six thousand miles beyond the seas and strangers to Indians in race, religion and civilisation. As has often been said, India was never conquered by the English in the literal sense of the term. The English became the paramount power in India by a series of events carried on by the help of Indian soldiers and Indian allies.

The people supported them and welcomed them because they promoted order and peace and introduced justice and good administration. In the early days of British rule in India, English statesmen regarded it as of a temporary character. They clearly said that it was their duty to so administer India as to help her to take up her own government and to administer it in her own fashion. But as time rolled on, and vested interests grew up and became strong, a contrary spirit came to dominate British policy in India. The administration came to be conducted less and less in a manner conducive to the development of the people as a nation and more and more so as to perpetuate their subjection. Indians noted it and protested against it. Many large-hearted Englishmen deplored it. Foreign critics also noted the fact. An eminent Frenchman, M. Challey, wrote in his book published a few years ago :

"Had England taken as a motto 'India for the Indians', had she continued following the idea of Elphinstone and Malcolm to consider her rule as temporary, she might, without inconsistency, grant to the national party gradual and increasing concessions which in time would give entire autonomy to the Indians, but that is not now her aim."

For half a century and more, Indians and Liberal-minded Englishmen had been urging England to adopt the policy of India for the Indians, to Indianise the administration and to give power and opportunity to Indians to administer their own affairs. Thirty years before the war, the Indian National Congress came into existence and it had ever since its birth urged that a fair measure of self-Government should be given to the

people. The scheme of reform which the Congress put forward in 1886, was calculated to secure them such power but they have not got it till now. Since 1908 we had specially stated that self-government on colonial lines was our goal.

I draw attention to these facts so that it may be remembered that we had been pressing for a recognition of our right to self-government long before the war. It is not the war, its events, and its results that have led us to ask for self-government for the first time. Even if the war did not come, our claim to it should have been granted long ago as a mere matter of right and simple justice. The war no doubt came to help us. The contributions which we were able to make brought about a happy change in the angle of vision of English statesmen. In December 1916, our two great national institutions, the Congress and the Muslim League, that is to say, the representatives of thinking India, jointly put forward a well-considered moderate scheme of reform which would have given to the people a substantial measure of self-government. It is an open secret now that the response which the Government of India suggested to this demand was so poor and inadequate that Mr. Austen Chamberlain returned the proposals and suggested the preparation of a more liberal measure which would give some responsibility to the people. In the meantime, agitation in support of the Congress-League scheme was growing. The Executive Governments in India, Imperial and Provincial, were generally strongly opposed to the proposals, many of them showed this opposition by trying to suppress the agitation by orders of internment under the Defence of India Act and in other ways, and created much unnecessary tension in public feeling. On the other hand, besides the Indians there were Englishmen and Englishwomen who urged that the promise of self-government should not be delayed. That high-souled Englishman, the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, said in the caurse of the service to which reference has been made before: "We must not look at our paramount position in the light of our new war ideals. The British rule in India must aim at giving India opportunities of self-development according to the natural event of its peoples. With this in view the first object of its rules must be to train Indians in self-government. If we turn away

from any such application of our principles to this country, it is but hypocrisy to come before God with the plea that our cause is the cause of liberty."

The situation rendered any early announcement of the intentions of Government necessary. It was in this state of affairs that the Secretary of State for India made the now famous declaration of the 20th August, 1917, in which he definitely stated that the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire was the policy of His Majesty's Government and that they had decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible.

It was a momentous utterance. But it was unnecessarily cautious and cold. We did not like all the qualifying conditions with which it was weighted. But we looked at it as a whole. It promised that substantial steps in the direction of the goal of responsible government in India would be taken as soon as possible, and that His Majesty's Government had decided that, accepting the Viceroy's invitation, the Secretary of State should shortly visit India to consider what those steps should be and to receive suggestions of representative bodies and others regarding them It also promised that ample opportunity would be afforded for public discussion of the proposals which would be submitted in due course to Parliament. We therefore welcomed the announcement and were grateful for it. Though dissatisfied with its many qualifying conditions, in the circumstances then existing, we accepted it with hope and gratitude. Mr. Montagu came to India with a deputation of distinguished men. Taking the announcement of the 20th August as laying down the terms of their reference, he and Lord Chelmsford elaborated proposals as to the first substantial steps which should be taken to give effect to the policy enunciated in it. The limitation of the announcement naturally had their effect in determining the nature and extent of their proposals. These proposals have now been before the public for several months. They have been variously criticised by various bodies. On the first publication of

the proposals, while some of our prominent public men gave them a cordial welcome, others condemned them as unsatisfactory and disappointing. Some urged their total rejection. The Congress-League scheme which had been put forward with the unanimous support of the public men of the country was calculated to transfer control to the representatives of the people, both in the Provincial Government and, subject to certain reservations, in the Government of India. The official scheme proposed a limited measure of control in the Provincial Governments and absolutely none over the Imperial Government. The official proposals thus fell very short of the Congress-League scheme. They were, therefore, generally regarded as indequate. It was clear that while acknowledging that the proposals constituted an advance on existng conditions in certain directions, the bulk of public opinion in India was not satisfied with the scheme as it stood. Almost everybody who was anybody wanted more or less important modifications and improvements in the scheme. But the scheme proposed the introduction of a certain measure of responsible government in the Provincial Governments, and was in this respect more in conformity with the announcement of the 20th August than the Congress-League scheme, and many of us urged that the official proposals should be accepted subject to the necessary modifications and improvements. This view found general acceptance in the country.

When the special Congress met at Bombay, it was apprehended in some quarters that the opinions of those who were in fovour of insisting upon the acceptance of the Congress-League Scheme and the rejection of the official proposals, might prevail at the Congress. But proceedings of the Congress lent no support to these apprehensions. While the Congress made its acknowledgments to Mrs. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford for the earnest attempt to inaugurate a system of responsible government in India, it made it clear that it regarded the proposals as they stood as unsatisfactory and disappointing. At the same time it recognised that the official scheme was more in consonance with the announcement of August 20th, and it therefore decided to accept that scheme in its outline and to urge modifications and improvements consistent with the outline which, in its opinion,

were absolutely necessary to make it a substantial first step towards responsible Government in India, that is, both in the Central and Provincial Governments. The All-India Muslim League also adopted the same view. Two months after, a Conference, organised by those of our prominent public men who had more cordially welcomed the proposals of reform than the great bulk of the public, met at Bombay. They too agreed with the Congress and the League in asking for certain essential modifications and improvements in the scheme. It has thus become as clear as noon-day light that enlightened Indian public opinion is unanimous in urging that the principle of responsible government should be introduced in the Government of India simultaneously with a similar reform in the Provinces, and that there should be a division of functions in the Central Government into reserved and transferred as a part of the first instalment of reforms. It is unanimous in urging fiscal freedom for India. It is unanimous in urging that half the number of the members of the Council of State should be elected.

It is unanimous in urging that Indians should constitute one-half of the Executive Government of India. It is unanimous in asking that the popular houses should elect their presidents and vice-presidents. It it unanimous in requiring that the elective majority should be four-fifths and that reserved list should be as small and the transferred list as large as possible. It is unanimous in asking that Ministers should be placed on a footing of perfect equality with the members of the Executive Council. It is unanimous in asking for a complete separation of judicial from executive functions. It is unanimous in urging that 50 per cent of the posts in the Indian Civil Service, and to start with, 25 per cent of the King's Commissions in the army, should be secured to Indians, and that adequate provision for training them should be made in the country itself. It is unanimous in urging that the ordinary constitutional rights, such as freedom of the press and public meetings and open judicial trials should be safeguarded, though there is a difference of opinion about the methods suggested to secure the end. I have not attempted an exhaustive enumeration. My object here is to show that there is notwithstanding differences over unimportant matters and not

withstanding all that we hear of divisions and parties, practical unanimity in the country about the most essential changes and improvements which are needed in the proposals of reform. I will not anticipate your decisions. It is for you to decide whether in view of the events which have taken place since the Congress met, you will reconsider any or all of the matters which were considered by the special Congress, or whether you will let its decisions stand as they are. Considering how grave and momentous are the issues involved, I would recónsider them and welcome any suggestions which would improve them. Since the Congress met, events have taken place which would obviously justify such a course. As a mere illustration, I draw attention to one. In the resolution relating to the Provincial Government, while holding that the people are ripe for the introduction of full provincial autonomy, the Congress said it was yet prepared, with a view of facilitating the passage of the reforms, to leave the departments of law, police and justice (prisons excepted) in the hands of the Executive Government for a period of six years. Since this resolution was passed, the Functions Committee as well as the Franchise Committee has already visited several provinces, and in two of the major Provinces it has heen urged that full provincial autonomy should be granted there at once, namely, the United Provinces and Bombay, in the former by the Provincial Congress Committee, and in the latter by the non-official members of the Bombay Legislative Council, among whom are such esteemed gentlemen of known moderate views as the Hon. Mr. Gokuldas Parekh. We may assume that Bengal and Madras also will demand full provincial autonomy. In view of these facts the resolutions of the Congress on the subject may well be reconsidered.

India and the Results of the War

But, ladies and gentlemen, by far the most important event which has taken place since the Congress met is the happy termination of the war. In concluding their report on Indian Constitutional Reforms, Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford said :

"If anything could enhance the sense of responsibility under which our recommendations are made in a matter fraught with

consequences so immense, it would be the knowledge that even as we bring our report to an end, far greater issues still hang in the balance upon the battlefields of France. It is there and not in Delhi or Whitehall that the ultimate decision of India's future will be taken."

Happily for India and the rest of the civilised world that decision has now been taken. It was announced in the memorable utterance of the Premier referred to before, in which he said : "You are entitled to rejoice, people of Britain, that the Allies, Dominions and India have won a glorious victory. It is the most wonderful victory for liberty in the history of the world." How does this great event affect our position ? How far is India going to share the fruits of the glorious victory to which it has been her privilege to contribute ? It is highly encouraging in this connection to remember how generous has been the appreciation expressed by the distinguished Premier and other statesmen of Great Britain of the services of India to the war. Let me recall a few of their utterances. Speaking in September, 1914, Mr. Asquith, the then Prime Minister of England, said :

"We welcome with appreciation and affection India's preferred aid in the Empire which knows no distinction of race or class, where all alike are subjects of the King-Emperor and are joint and equal custodians of her common interest and fortunes. We hail with profound and heart felt gratitude their association side by side and shoulder to shoulder with the Home and Dominion troops under a flag which is a symbol to all of the unity that the world in arms cannot dissever or dissolve."

Mr. Bonar Law said :

"I do not think we fully realise how much these Indians who have fought and died by the side of our soldiers have helped us through these long months."

Speaking on the 9th September, Lord Haldane, the then Lord Chancellor of England, said :

"Indian soldiers are fighting for the liberty of humanity as much as ourselves. India has freely given her lives and treasure

in humanity's great cause; hence things cannot be left as they are." Speaking in February 1917, in the House of Commons, Mr. Lloyd George said :

"The contribution of the Dominions and of India has been splendid. The assistance they have given us in the most trying hours of this campaign has been incalculable in its value."

In the 'Introduction' to Col. Merewether's *Indian Corps in France*, Lord Curzon said :

"The book describes the manner in which the force and the drafts and reinforcements by which it was followed comforted themselves in the fearful struggle of 1914-15. That the Indian Expeditionary Force arrived in the nick of time, that it helped to save the cause both of the Allies and of civilisation after the sanguinary tumult of the opening weeks of the war, has been openly acknowledged by the highest in the land from the Sovereign downwards. I recall that it was emphatically stated to me by Lord French himself. The nature and value of that service can never be forgotten."

Speaking again in the House of Commons, Mr. Llyod George said :

"And then there is India. How bravely, how loyally, she has supported the British Armies. The memory of the powerful aid which she willingly accorded in the hour of our trouble will not be forgotten after the war is over, and when the affairs of India come up for examination and for action."

Speaking on the 8th of November last, Mr. Lloyd George said :

"These young nations (the Dominions) fought bravely and contributed greatly and won their place at the Council Table. What is true of them is equally true of the Great Empire of India, which helped us materially to win these brilliant victories which were the beginning of the disintegration of our foes. India's necessities must not be forgotten when the Peace Conference is reached. We have had four years of great brotherhood. Let it not end there."

I am sure, ladies and gentlemen, we all feel most deeply grateful to these our English fellow-subjects for their generous appreciation of our contributions to the war. The question now is to what extent is India going to benefit by the principles for which she gave her lives and treasure, namely, the principles of justice and liberty, of the right of every nation to live an unmolested life of freedom and to grow according to its own God-given nature, to manage its own affairs, and to mould its own destiny. The principles for which Great Britain and the Allies fought have now been embodied in the Peace proposals of President Wilson to which I have referred before. These principles have been adopted with the hearty concurrence and support of Great Britain.

Indeed, the credit for adopting them is in one sense greater in the case of Britain and France than in the case of America. For Britain and France had borne the brunt of the war for four years and by their unconquerable courage and heroic sacrifices had also been incomparably greater than those of America and their feelings far more deeply injured. It was the more praiseworthy of them, therefore, that they readily agreed to the Peace proposals, which ran counter in some instances to the decisions which they had themselves previously arrived at.

Now the principle that runs through the Peace proposals is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another. Each nation is to be given freedom to determine its own affairs and to mould its own destinies Russia is to have an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for independent determination of her own political development and national policy. Austria-Hungary is to be accorded the opportunity of autonomous development. International guaranttees of political and economic independence and territorial integrity are to be secured to the Balkan States, and to the independent Polish States which are to be created. Nationalities other than Turkish now under Turkish rule are to be assured security of life and autonomous development.

In the adjustment of colonial claims the principle to be fol-

lowed is that in determining such questions the sovereignty and interests of the population concerned are to have equal weight with the equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined. How far are these principles of autonomy and self-determination to be applied to India ? That is the question for consideration. We are happy to find that the Governments of Britain and France have already decided to give effect to these principles in the case of Syria and Mesopotamia. This has strengthened our hope that they will be extended to India also. Standing in this ancient capital of India, both of the Hindu and Mohammedan periods, it fills me my countrymen and countrywomen, with inexpressible sorrow and shame to think that we, the descendants of Hindus who ruled for four thousand years in this extensive empire, and the descendants of Musalmans who ruled here for several hundred years, should have so far fallen from our ancient state, that we should have to argue our capacity for even a limited measure of autonomy and self rule.

But there is so much ignorance among those who have got a determining voice in the affairs of our country at present that, if I but had the time, I would tell them something of the capacity of our peoples—Hindus and Musalmans—till the advent of British rule in India. I may refer those who care to know it, to the papers published at pages 581 to 624 of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's book on 'Poverty and un-British Rule in India'. I will content myself with saying that one-third of India, comprising a population of nearly 60 millions, is still under Indian rule, and that the administration of many of the Indian States compared favourably with that of British India. Has the fact of our being under British rule for 150 years rendered us less fit for self-rule than our fellow-subjects in our Indian States are ?

Are a people who can produce a scientist like Sir J.C. Bose, a poet like Sir Rabindranath Tagore, lawyers like Sir Bhashyam Iyengar and Sir Rash Behari Ghosh, administrators like Sir T. Madhava Row and Sir Salar Jung, judges of the High Court like Sir Syed Mahmood and Telang, patriots and public men

like Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Pheroze Shah Mehta and G.K. Gokhale, industrialists like J.N. Tata and his worthy son Sir Dorab Tata and a servant of humanity like Mr. M.K. Gandhi and soldiers who have rendered a good account of themselves in all the theatres of war, unfit for a measure of self-government in their domestic affairs? I hope that the insult of such an assumption will no longer be added to the injury that is being done us by our being kept out of our birthright to self-government, and that the principle of self-determination will be extended to India.

The Principle of Self-Determination

Ladies and gentlemen, let us make it clear what we mean when we talk of self-determination. There are two aspects of self-determination, and it has been spoken of in the Peace proposals. One is that the people of certain colonies and other places should have the right to say whether they will live under the suzerainty of one power or of another. So far as we Indians are concerned we have no need to say that we do not desire to exercise that election. Since India passed directly under the British Crown, we have owned allegiance to the Sovereign of England. We stand unshaken in that allegiance. We gladly renewed our allegiance to His Majesty the King-Emperor in person when he was pleased to visit India in 1911 after his Coronation in England. We still desire to remain subjects of the British Crown.

There is, however, the second and no less important aspect of self-determination, namely, that being under the British Crown, we should be allowed complete responsible government on the lines of the Dominions, in the administration of all our domestic affairs. We are not yet asking for this either. We are asking for a measure of self-government which we have indicated by our Congress-League Scheme of 1916. We urge that the measure of self-government, *i.e.*, of responsible government, to be given to us should be judged and determined in the light of the principle of self-determination which has emerged triumphant out of this devastating war. In order that this should be

done it is not necessary that the proposals of reform which have been elaborated by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford should be laid aside and a brand new scheme be prepared. The Special Congress and the Muslim League have expressed their willingness to accept those proposals with the modifications and improvements which they have advocated. This great Congress representing the people of all classes and creeds—Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis and Christians—representing all interests, landholders and tenants, merchants and businessmen, educationists, publicists and representatives of other sections of the people is assembled here today to express the mind of the people on this question. One special and particularly happy feature of this Congress is the presence at it of merely nine hundred delegates of the tenant class who have come at great sacrifice, from far and near, to join their voice with the rest of their countrymen in asking for a substantial measure of self-government. The representative Congress of the people of India will determine and declare what in its opinion should be the measure of reform which should be introduced into the country. Let the British Government give effect to the principle of self-determination in India by accepting the proposls so put forward by the representatives of the people of India. Let the preamble to the Statute which is under preparation incorporate the principle of self-detrmination and provide that the representatives of the people of India shall have an effective voice in determining the future steps of progress towards complete responsible government. This will produce contentment and gratitude among the people of India and strengthen their attachment to the British Empire.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think I have said enough to show how strong is our case on the ground of justice for a substantial measure of responsible Government. While we have noted with thankfulness the attitude of British statesmen towards the cause of Indian Reform, while we have noted with satisfaction that in their election manifestoes, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Asquith, in short, leaders of all parties in the United Kingdom, have pledged themselves to the introduction of responsible Government in India, we regret to find that a

Limited Liability Company of businessmen known as the Indo-British Association have organised themselves in London with the distinct object of opposing the cause of Indian Reform. This Indo-British Association and other narrow-minded European and Anglo-Indian bodies in India and in England, who are opposed to any power being transferred to Indians have been misusing the Rowlatt Committee Report to create a wrong impression in the minds of the British public that the people of India are disaffected towards the British Crown. This is a wicked attempt. One should have thought that with the overwhelming evidence of the loyalty of the people of India to the British Crown, fresh in the minds of the English people and of the Allied world, not even the worst detractors of Indians would venture to make such a dastardly attempt at this juncture. The Rowlatt Committee itself has brought the fact of that loyalty into great prominence. The Committee have summed up their conclusions as follows :

"We have now investigated all the conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement. In Bombay they have been purely Brahmin and mostly Chitpavan. (I am quoting from the Report and not expressing my own opinion). In Bengal the conspirators have been young men belonging to the educated classes. Their propaganda has been elaborate, persistent and ingenious. In their own province it has produced a long series of murders and robberies. In Bihar and Orissa, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Madras it took no root but occasionally led to crime or disorder. In the Punjab the return of emigrants from America bent on revolution and bloodshed produced numerous outrages and the Ghadar Conspiracy of 1915. In Burma too the Ghadar movement was active but was arrested. Finally came a Mohammedan conspiracy confined to a small clique of fanatics and designed to overthrow British Rule with foreign aid. All these plots were directed towards one and the same objective—the overthrow by force of British Rule in India. Sometimes they have been isolated, sometimes they have been interconnected, sometimes they have been encouraged and supported by German influence.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, assuming that the whole of this statement is correct, let us see what the committee sayt further about these plots. They say : "All have been successfully encountered with the support of Indian loyalty." This should be enough to silence the caluminators of India. Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford observed in their report on Indian Constitutional Reforms : "Whatever qualifications may be needed in the case of particular classes, the people of India as a whole are in genuine sympathy with the cause which the Allies represent. However much they may find fault with the Government, they are true in their loyalty to the British Crown". In another place they truly observed : "The loyalty of the country generally was emphasised by the attempts made by a very small section of the population to create trouble." I most sincerely deplore as I am sure every thoughtful Indian does, that any of our youths should have been misled into what the Rowlatt Committee have described as a movement of perverted religion and equally perverted patriotism. I deplore that even a few of our young men should have been misled into criminal organisation or conspiracy against the Government. I equally deplore that they should have committed any acts of violence against any of their fellow-men. But let not the misdeeds of a small number of unfortunately misguided youths be pitted against the unswerving loyalty of 320 millions of the people of India. It is not fair.

But unfair though it is, our opponents are making a strenuous endeavour to defeat the cause of reform or to whittle down the reform proposals by misrepresenting us and it is necessary for us to correct their misrepresentations and to show how strong is the case for reform. We have to emphasise that apart from any considerations of the Government here being a good or bad Government, we are entitled to have self-government as every other nation is entitled to have it. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman said years ago that "good government is no substitute for self-government." Speaking in the House of Commons at a much earlier period, in the thirties of the last century, Macaulay truly observed that "no nation can be perfectly well governed unless it governs itself". No arguments are therefore needed to justify our request that we should

also be allowed to govern ourselves. The justice of our case is overwhelmingly strong. With all the advantages that it has, and which we gladly and gratefully acknowledged, the system of Government which has been introduced into India, has numerous defects in it. We have acknowledged its good points repeatedly; we have also pointed out its weak points repeatedly. By way of illustration I will invite attention to some of these here. Every nation is entitled to administer its own affairs. It follows that the people belonging to the Indian nation should manage their own affairs. As I said before, when the British Government was established in this country, their idea was that their rule should be temporary, only to enable Indians to regain, to readjust their lost balance and be able to take charge again of their own affairs. A number of British statesmen have said that they were only the guardian of the welfare of the people of India. But the system of administration which has been established is opposed to this idea. Under it, European Agency has been introduced into the administration in such an enormous measure that all the services are dominated in the higher branches by Europeans. The result has been that opportunities have not been given to Indians to exercise the power of administration, which alone could enable them to exercise power successfully and satisfactorily, and Europeans have been imported in large numbers from England, not only for the Military Services but also for the Civil Services. At present the position is, and has been from 1833, when the statute was passed, that the statute declared that no Indian subject of His Majesty would be debarred from obtaining, or holding any appointment, for which he is qualified. This is a rule for which we have often expressed our gratitude. But, ladies and gentlemed, in justice the rule should have been different and more liberal so far as Indians are concerned. It should have been that Indians should be employed in the various public offices of their country and that only where circumstances made it necessary, should Europeans, who possessed expert or special knowledge, be employed in any department. Thus the correct rule which should have been followed has not been followed. In spite of the Statute of 1833, very few Indians were appointed. Then came the Mutiny and the Indian Civil Service Act was

passed. It was decided that the examination for the Civil Service would be held in London only. For examining even Indians as to their qualifications for serving in India, the examination was to be held in England; Indians prayed that the examination should be held at least at the same time in India also. A Committee appointed by the Secretary of State reported in favour of simultaneous examinations in both countries. But that recommendation has been disregarded. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji spent sixty years of his life in agitating for this simple measure of justice. It is painful to remember that he died without seeing it accepted. The result has been that though an agitation for the admission of Indians into all the higher departments of the public services of the country has been carried on for over sixty years, we have not yet got a fair footing in those services At the time when the Public Services Commission reported in 1914, less than 10 per cent of the posts were filled by Indian and over 90 per cent were filled by Europeans. That was in the Indians Civil Service. In the other services also Europeans have had a practical monopoly of all the higher posts.

Then take the Military Services. For a long time past Indians have been urging that a fair number of commissions in army should be thrown open to them. The demand has not been met. The Duke of Connaught recommended many decades ago that a military college should be established in India for training Indians as officers. Since the Congress met in 1885, it has repeatedly urged that such a college should be established and commissions in the army should be thrown open to Indians. This was not done. I know it for a fact that when the Coronation Durbar was to take place in India in 1911, Lord Hardinge had recommended that the Kings' Commission should be thrown open to Indians. That was not done. Years rolled along, but the bare justice which the Indians had been praying for was not done. Then came the war. We offered, unanimously and from all sides, our loyal support to the Government. We urged that our soldiers should be sent to France and Flanders to fight in defence of the Empire and in vindication of the principles of liberty and justice. We also prayed with an un-

animous voice that commissions in the army should be regularly thrown open to Indians. The war went on for three years without our last prayer being heeded. When Indian soldiers serving in the banks had won Victoria Crosses, when they had again established their valour and fidelity in many fields, then came the announcement that 10 commissions in the army would be open to Indians and only five persons, I understand, have so far been nominated to these commissions; for, four men were given only temporary commissions. We naturally feel that justice has not been done to us in spite of all that we have done during this war.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there are so many other matters in which our reasonable demands have not been conceded, in which justice has not been done to us. The administration has been unnecessarily expensive. In the Military Services and in the Civil Services, high salaries are paid, mostly to Europeans, and the country thus loses every year an enormous amount of money which should be distributed among its own children. If three-fourths of the expenditure on the European services were to be spent upon Indians, India would be in a far more prosperous condition than she is or can be in so long as the existing state of things continues. But our repeated requests for a reduction of high salaries is met by a further increase in those salaries and the substitution of Indians for Europeans is still a matter for further consideration.

Take again the question of education. We have been praying that education should be made universal and better. We have not been able to persuade the Government to do so. Mr. Gokhale intoduced a bill to make it permissive for municipalities to make primary education compulsory. That bill was not allowed to pass. We acknowledge with gratitude all that the Government have done since then in the matter of education—primary, secondary, university. But we feel that what has been done is very small compared with that remains to be done.

Then there is the question of the poverty of the people and of public health. Poverty has been very deep and widespread.

We have urged measures to remove it. There have been numerous famines during the last century, and we have lost millions of people from death from famines. Public health has been low. The mortality from plague has been very great. During the last 20 years we have lost many times more lives from plague than what have been lost during the whole of this devastating war in Europe. The vitality of our people is poor; the average duration of life is shortened. The whole situation is painful. As a partial but important remedy, we have urged and urged, the Famine Commission also urged, that indigenous industries should be promoted and encouraged. They did so in 1880. Since then the Congress has repeated the prayer, but that prayer has not been listened to. It was only when the war broke out that the Industrial Commission was appointed and you have only to read its report to realise how great, how sad, has been the loss which the country has suffered by reason of industries not having been encouraged. There are many other departments in which the existing system of Government has failed the people. Take for instance the question of currency. The needs of the great bulk of the people of India who owned their little savings in silver, were not sufficiently considered when the mints were closed to silver in 1893. In other respects also the needs of the people of India have not been met in the matter of currency and banking. I do not want to prolong the list. My object in drawing attention to these is to emphasise the fact that the bureaucratic system which exists at present has failed. While we gratefully acknowledge that it has achieved a good deal, while we acknowledge all the good that it has done, we say that it has failed very largely to promote the welfare of the people as it should have promoted. I cannot express this idea better than in the words of Lord Mayo who said many years ago :

"We have not done our duty to the people of this land. Millions have been spent on the conquering of the race which might have been spent in enriching and in elevating the children of the soil. We have not done much and we can do a great deal more. We must first take into account the inhabitants of the country. The welfare of the people of India is our primary ob-

ject. If we are not here for their good, we ought not to be here at all."

This was said by Lord Mayo nearly fifty years ago. Of course things have improved in some directions; but a great deal more yet remains to be done. This is a very brief and imperfect summary of our complaint against the system which exists, and it is our settled conviction that self-government is the only remedy. It is therefore that we press for it with all the earnestness we can command.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to put in a word of appeal here to the Indian Civil Service. I was surprised and pained as I am sure, you all must have been, to read a circular issued by the Secretary to the Indian Civil Service Association or some body like that in Bihar, asking them for an organised expression of opinion on behalf of the Civil Service with regard to the Reform proposals. Of course everybody is free and every civilian as much as any one else, to hold, and if he so chooses, to express his individual opinion about any matter in which he feels interested. But that members of the Indian Civil Service should as a service organise a united expression of their opinion against the Reforms, is a thing which has shocked Indian sentiment. The circular points out that an impression has gained that the Service is favourable to the proposals and that this effort has been made to remove that impression or correct it. The circular further says that such an effort is being made in every province. I appeal to the members of the Indian Civil Service to think whether this is a right course for them to pursue in the matter of constitutional reforms in India. They have covenanted to serve India. Many of them have served her well and we feel grateful to them for it. Many Indian Civil Servants have laid India under a deep obligation. We cherish the honoured name of Allan Octavian Hume who was the founder of the Indian National Congress. We revere the memory of the godly Sir William Wedderburn who devoted all his time up to the last moment of his life to the promotion of the good of India. We have the respected name of Sir Henry Cotton whose lifelong service to this country will not easily be forgotten. Even

now there are many members of the Indian Civil Service retired, and even in the Service itself, who are really and truly the friends of the people of India. I expect every fair-minded man among them will agree that any attempt made by the Service as a body to prejudice the cause of reform or to oppose it, will be a matter for most serious complaint to the people of India. We look forward to their co-operation in any measure of reform that may be introduced. We hope that the advice which Lord Hardinge gave them would be remembered by them; and that they would all put their intellect and strength of character in supporting liberal reforms and making them successful rather than in opposing them or getting them whittled down I have already referred to the misue which is being made by some of our opponents of the Rowlatt Committee's recommendations. There is also unfortunately the oposition organised in England by the British Indian Association and the opposition of Europeans in this country. If the Indian Civil Service will at this critical juncture throw in their united weight against the proposals for reform, it would be a matter of which India will have serious reason to complain. This is a juncture when it is necessary that the cause of India should be correctly and faithfully represented, and we expect that members of the Indian Civil Service will stand up for the interest of India and of Indian, for justice to the people of the country in the service of which they have enrolled themselves and spent the best of their years.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have shown that we have many complaints against the existing bureaucratic system. I have also said that self-government is the only remedy. It is our conviction that if we Indians had an effective share in the administration of our affairs we should have managed things very differently. How we should have managed them is not a mere matter of conjecture, but is clearly shown by the resolutions that we have passed during the last 32 years in regard to many questions of public interest. Those resolutions show that if we had an effective voice, an effective control in the administration of our country's affairs we would probably have achieved at least half as much progress as the Japanese have achieved, that our people would have been more prosperous, more contented,

and in every way more happy than they are at present. We ask for this opportunity of national self-development, and trust that our British fellow-subjects, including those in the Indian Civil Service, will support and help us in this demand. It is particularly necessary that they should help us against those who are misrepresenting us and making a misuse against us of the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee. I have expressed before this my whole hearted condemnation of the ways pursued by some of our misguided youths. I deplore that they were misled. But what is now of importance is to remember the circumstances under which evil tendencies grew up among them. I would ask every Englishman who considers this question to make a mental survey of what passed in India from the period of 1897 to 1915. I would ask him to remember that it was the Plague Administration in Poona that gave rise to alarm and resentment among the people and led to the unfortunate murder of two Englishmen and to the deportation of the Natu brothers. I would ask him to remember the partition of Bengal I would ask him to remember the repressive measures which were adopted to put down the agitation against the partition; also the various other repressive measures passed between 1897 to 1915. I will then ask him to consider what has been done by the Government in the same period in the matter of reforms and in redressing the grievances of Indians. He will have to recognise that while on the one side there were causes created for discontent, the reasonable demands which Indians had ben making were not granted. Our industries were not encouraged. The difficulty in finding careers for our young men was growing. Education was not sufficiently spread; poverty was increasing, racial inequality was kept up between Europeans and Indians; there were invidious distinctions made between Indians and Europeans in the services and in the matter bearing arms. All these causes contributed to a state of feeling which might well lead, deplorably but pardonably lead, some Indian youths into the paths of sedition. If our English friends will bear these facts in mind, I think they will arrive at a juster judgment that they are likely to do otherwise. All that I would say to them is that the remedy for the state of things which the Rowlatt Committee deplore, assuming their conclusions to be

correct, lies not in forging any repressive legislation but in granting large and liberal measures of reform, which will remove the root-causes of discontent and promote contentment and satisfaction among the Indian people.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have already tried your patience hard and I would not detain you longer. But before I conclude let me say one final word to you. The situation is this. Our cause is just; the opportunity for pressing it is fovourable. But our opponents are strong and well-organised. This is great need of sending a strong deputation to England so that our cause may not suffer for want of good and proper advocacy. I hope therefore that you will decide to send such a deputation at an early date. But the strength which your deputation will possess, the influence which it will exercise, will be derived from you. So it is the organisation which you will create in India, the solid sentiment upon which your political organisation will be built up here, which will determine the strength and influence which your deputations will have in England. To that end I ask your attention to the one principle which seems to be very much in favour with you just now. And that is the principle of self-determination. You have asked that the British Government should extend the principle of self-determination to India in her political reconstruction. I ask you, my brothers and sisters, to apply that principle to your affairs so far as it lies in your power. I ask you to determine that henceforward you shall be equal fellow subjects of your British fellow-subjects and equals of all the rest of your fellow-men in the world. I ask you to determine that hereafter you will resent, and resent most strongly, any effort to treat you as an inferior people. I ask you to determine that henceforward you will claim, and claim with all the strength that you command that in your own country you shall have opportunities to grow as freely as Englishmen grow in the United Kingdom. If you will exercise this much of self-determination, and go about including these principles of equality, of liberty and of fraternity among our people, if you will make every brother, however humble or lowly placed he may be, to feel that the ray Divine is as much in him as in any other man, however highly placed he may be; if you

will make every brother realise that he is entitled to be treated as an equal fellow-subject, you will have determined your future for yourself, and then those who are in power will not long be able to resist any of your reasonable demands. I ask you, my brethern, to give this matter your most earnest consideration. You have got the opportunity now. The scheme of reforms which has been proposed gives you the opportunity. Whatever may be the powers which may be entrusted to Provincial and Central Governments, electorates must be formed and Councils must be expanded. The formation of electorates gives you the best chance to instruct every one of your fellow-men in the political principles which you wish he should understand and follow, and upon which our future construction should rest. I appeal to you to begin your efforts, to organise and instruct our future electorates, that is to say our fellow-men who will exercise the power that we seek should be given to them. I appeal to you to establish Congress Committee in every *Taluka* and every *Tehsil* and see that the people understand these principles. If you will do this, if you will work in that spirit with that determination, if you will show that much of self-determination and work unitedly with one purpose, I am sure, God will grant us self-determination earlier than many of us imagine we are going to get it.

6

TOWARDS PROMISED LAND OF FREEDOM

Fellow delegates, it is indeed an exceptional honour to be thought fit to take the helm of the great ship of the Indian National Congress in the stormy weather we are passing through. The honour you have conferred on me is deserved only by a skilled pilot, who can afford to make light of the breakers and the rocks ahead. I wish your choice had fallen on one, who had both the skill and the confidence to steer clear of all danger the noble vessel you have so generously committed to my care, when it is about to sail on a perilous voyage. But all too unworthy as I am for the great distinction you have bestowed on me, I derive solace from the fact that there is a special feature of this session, which no doubt has influenced your choice, and which perhaps widens the qualification for the chair to include even such as I. That special feature presents itself at the outset and runs through our whole programme. It arises out of the recent tragic events in the Punjab which must naturally form the keynote of our proceedings. Those events furnish many a dark chapter to the history of the past twelve months, but none darker than the great tragedy enacted in this very city of Amritsar in April last. Fellow delegates, you have assembled here in deep mourning over the cruel murder of hundreds of your brothers and in electing your president you have assigned to him the position of chief mourner. That position I accept in all reverence and I sincerely thank you for it. The responsibility, however, remains and is considerably augmented by the great solemnity of the occasion. I can only hope to discharge it by your generous indulgence and the kindly co-operation which I trust I shall receive at your hands in a very liberal measure.

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*Presidential address delivered by Pandit Motilal Nehru at the Amsitsar Congress held on 27-30 December, 1919.

Last year when we met at Delhi, the great war had ended and we were all looking forward, full of hope, to the great peace which would endure and which would bring the blessings of freedom to all nationalities. The time had come for the fulfilment of the many pledges made to us and, in accordance with the principles laid down by statesmen in Europe and America, this Congress demanded self-determination for our country. Peace has now come, partially at least, but it has brought little comfort even to the victors. The pledges made by statesmen have proved but empty words, the principles for which the war was fought have been forgotten and the famous fourteen points are dead and gone. *Vae victis* is still, as of old, the order of the day. Russia, hungering for peace, is allowed no respite, and a number of little wars are waging on the continent of Europe. Prussianism has been crushed but it has been reborn in the other countries of the West, which have enthroned millitarism on high. The fate of Turkey hangs in the balance, and Ireland and Egypt are being made to feel the might of the British Empire. In India, the first fruits of the peace were the Rowlatt Bills and Martial Law. It was not for this that the war was fought, it was not for this that many hundreds of thousands laid down their lives. Is it any wonder that the peace has aroused no enthusiasm and that the vast majority of the people of India have refused to participate in the peace celebration ?

With coercion has come concession. That has been the old time policy in India, as in Ireland, persisted in by England in spite of repeated disillusionment. Our rulers have failed to realise that repression and conciliation cannot go hand in hand; that the grace of a gift lies more in the manner of giving than in the thing given. And so the much discussed Reform Bill has been hurried through Parliament so that this "big meeting", as Mr. Bonar Law put it, may be pacified by it to a certain extent at least. The new Act demands our most careful consideration. I shall deal with it at a large stage and it will be for you to decide how far it meets with your wishes.

But through the surrounding gloom has come a ray of bright

sunshine which has cheered up many a suffering individual and family in India. His Majesty the King Emperor has on the eve of this great meeting been graciously pleased to send out to us a message of His Royal clemency to be exercised by the Viceroy in the name and on behalf of His Majesty to all political offenders suffering imprisonment or restriction on their liberty. In the gracious words of the proclamation it is the "sentiments of affection and devotion" with which His Majesty and His predecessors have been animated that have consoled us in our misfortunes. It is for us, fellow delegates, on our own behalf and on behalf of the people of India whom we represent to convey your sincere homage to His Majesty and our humble appreciation of His royal benevolence. I have no doubt that you will discharge this loyal duty in a befitting manner and send out a hearty welcome of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales who is to visit our country next winter. Let us gratefully join His Majesty in his "hopes of the future and in the fervent prayer" to Almighty God that by his wisdom and under His guidance India may be led to greater prosperity and contentment and may grow to the fulness of political freedom.

It is due to this royal mercy that we have among us today the great leaders of the Punjab who till yesterday were in jail. On behalf of this great Congress I offer them the warmest of welcome. They have passed through the fiery ordeal of suffering for the cause and they have come back to us to take their rightful place in the councils of this great assembly. Their suffering has not been in vain. It has taught a lesson which we in this Congress, I trust, will not fail to learn.

In Memoriam

But before we procced further we must pause for a moment to pay our tribute of respect to the memory of one of our leaders who has passed away from our midst since we last met in Delhi. Nawab Sayed Mohammad, the President of the 28th Congress, held in Karachi in 1913 and for many years the Joint General Secretary of the Congress, died in Madras on the 13th February last. He was one of our foremost publicmen and

had the courage to adopt the Congress creed at a time when the great majority of our Mohammedan brothers were keeping aloof the national movement. May his soul rest in peace.

We must also do reverence to the sacred memory of the dead who were killed in Amritsar and elsewhere in the Punjab, and to the living who were put to indignities worse even than death and suffered the most shameful barbarities. No monument in marble or bronze is needed to consecrate the memory of the dead or the suffering of the living. Our speeches here will be forgotten, the resolutions you pass may in the future, have interest only for the historian, but India will never forget the sacrifice and the sufferings of these children of hers.

The Punjab

As I have already indicated, the Punjab has the right to claim the first attention of this Congress. But before I deal with the various problems which it presents for our consideration I dseire to congratulate you heartily, my fellow-countrymen and women of the Punjab, and more specially those of Amritsar, for the courageous public spirit you have shown in holding the present session of your great National Assembly in this city. You resolved in happier times to invite the Congress to your Province, little dreaming of the dark days you were destined to go through before you were to realise your expectations. You lost no time in forming your Reception Committee and were cheerfully busying yourself with your patriotic work when a great calamity suddenly descended upon you. You have borne this affliction and at the same time have adhered to your resolve. Your spokesman at Delhi, who invited the Congress, lies in jail together with many of his colleagues and has only now been happily released. Yet you did not flinch or seek to cast aside the burden you had voluntarily undertaken. All honour to you for your devoted patriotism. All praise for your patient suffering.

India has suffered much at the hands of an alien and reactionary bureaucracy, but the Punjab has in that respect acquir-

ed a most unenviable notoriety. Competent observers have borne testimony to the spirit that has animated the Punjab administration ever since it came under British rule. Sir Henry Cotton and Mr. Bernard Houghton, both eminent members of the Indian Civil Service, have told us of the retrogressive and backward condition of the province and the militarist tendencies which hold sway there. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in his book "The Awakening of India", says :

"It is generally conceded in India that the most incompetent of the Government is that of the Punjab. It takes its stand upon two foundation rocks "Prestige" and "Sedition", the meaning of the former being that it can do what it likes, and of the latter that if any Indian questions its doings his house will be raided and he will be deported......It has no notion of statesmanlike handling, no idea of political methods. The man in power simply uses his power whether it is in the form of a not too honest detective department or a not too discriminating executive or judiciary."

The proximity of the Punjab to the frontier has enabled its administrators time and again to enforce their will on successive Viceroys and Secretaries of State. The bogey of the frontier is exploited to the uttermost and the proposals made by the "man on the spot" seldom fail to secure acceptance at the hands of the higher authorities. With Delhi almost on the border and with Simla for its summer capital, the Government of the Punjab has the additional advantage of having the ear of the Viceroy, and it has thus come about that being the worst Government in India, it is the most favoured of all provincial administrations. Public life is not likely to thrive under these conditions and it is no wonder that for long there was no marked growth of political ideas in the Punjnb.

In order to appreciate the causes which ultimately led to the catastrophe of April last and its sequel, it is desirable to consider briefly the forces which have been at work ever since the first pulsations of public life began to be noticed by the authorities. Before 1905 there was practically no public life in the Punjab, but the stupendous blunder of Lord Curzon in effecting

the ɪ artition of Bengal in the face of a nation's resentment not only convulsed the affected province but sent a thrill of excitement and discontent throughout the country, which could not fail to arouse public activity in the Punjab. The introducion of the Colonisation Bill in the local Legislative Council shortly after brought trouble to the very doors of the people. By this bill it was intended to curtail the valuable vested rights of the so-called colonists and to deprive them of the fruits of their labour which had converted the desolate wilds around Lyallpur into a smiling garden. A strong agitation followed and this was dealt with by the usual policy of repression. About this time the editor and proprietor of the Punjabee newspaper were convicted. Shortly after, the Colonisation Bill was passed by the local Council. But these measures failed to put down the agitation which was continued with redoubled energy. The more excitable among the people came into conflict with the police and there were riots in Lahore and Rawalpindi in April 1907.

Against the arrest and trial of the actual rioters no sensible person can have anything to say but there was no justification for the arrest of **Lala Hansraj Sawhney** and some other leading public men, as was shown at their trial. Even less excusable was the deportation with trial of Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh. The policy of the Punjab Government in those days, and handed down as a legacy to succeeding Lieutenant-Governors, was to shut their eyes to their own reactionary administration and keep the Government of India and the Secretary of State in ignorance of the real causes of the disturbances by supplying them with coloured accounts and fixing responsibility for their own lapses on the poor "agitator". Be it said however to the credit of Lord Minto that he refused to assent to the unjust law passed by the Punjab Council. But there was no lack of other weapons of repression in the already over-stocked armoury of the Punjab Government and these continued to be freely used during the years 1907 to 1909. The methods adopted were the suppression of the press and the prosecution of individuals unacceptable to the Government. Needless to say the young sapling could not weather the continuous storm it was subjected to

and there was little manifestation of public life in the Punjab during the years 1910 to 1913.

But repression and terrorism have never yet killed the life of a nation, they but increase the disaffection and derive it underground to pursue an unhealthy course breaking out occasionally into crimes of violence. And this brings further repression and so the vicious circle goes on. No one can but deplore violence and political crime. But let us not forget that this is the direct outcome of continued repression. It is due to the perversity of the executive which blinds itself to the causes of the discontent and, like a mad bull, goes about attacking all who dare to stand up against it.

Sir Denzil Ibbetson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, during the troublous days of 1907, was not slow to perceive the "new air which was blowing through men's minds" but instead of adjusting his sails to this "new air" he chose to steer his course right against it. He, as well as his successor, followed the broad and easy path of piling repression on repression in accordance with the hallowed traditions of the Punjab Administration.

This was the state of the Punjab when her destinies were placed in the hands of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. It was a splendid opportunity for a broad-minded and generous-hearted statesman to strengthen the foundation of the Empire by doing the barest justice to the natural aspirations of a people to whom the Empire owed so much. How Sir Michael acquitted himself of this high trust every Indian knows.

During the early days of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's rule occurred the Komagata Maru incident. The unfortunate men who had left their homes in a spirit of peaceful enterprise, many not wishing to return to India at all, found every door shut in their faces and were forced to return. The reception prepared for them by the Government of India, presumably at the instance of the Punjab Government, was the passing of the Ingress into India Ordinance, which empowered the Government to restrict the liberty of any person entering India. On landing in India

they found themselve prisoners and, broken down as they were by the consistent ill-treatment they had received at home and abroad, they completely lost their heads and the unfortunate Budge-Budge riot was result.

The Komagata Maru episode marked the recrudescence of unrest in the Punjab and afforded a pretext to Sir Michael O'Dwyer to ask for more "effective power" from the unwilling Government of Lord Hardinge. During 1914 and the early part of 1915 insistent demands continued to be made far a *carte blanche* to deal with the situation and a draft ordinance of a drastic character was submitted to the Government of India for approval and promulgation. At last Lord Hardinge was compelled to yield and the Defence of India Act which substantially embodied the provisions of this draft ordinance was hurriedly passed through the India Council. How this "essentially war measure" has been used not only in the Punjab but in the other provinces as well to deal with matters wholly unconnected with the war, we all know. Sir Michael O'Dwyer was not slow to utilise it and soon after reported its "salutary effect" to the Government of India.

The years 1915 to 1917 were occupied with various conspiracy trials by special tribunals constituted under the Defence of India Act. The vernacular press was ruthlessly suppressed and hundreds of persons were interned under the Defence of India Act or the Ingress Ordinance. It was during this period that Lokamanya Tilak and Srijut Bepin Chandra Pal were prohibited from entering the province lest they should introduce the virus of Home Rule here. This order was recently withdrawn as far as Mr. Tilak was concerned and I am sure you will all join with me in offering a most cordial welcome to him here after his arduous labours in England for the cause. To Mr. Pal, who is also present here, I offer a warm welcome.

War Activities

I now come to the war activities of the O'Dwyerian regime during which, in the name of patriotism and the Empire, methods were employed which were even worse than those I have so far noticed. These could only have been practised in the Punjab either by the direct sanction or connivance or Sir

Michael O'Dwyer or by over-zealous subordinate in the hope of reward. The truth of the Persian saying :

> If a king tolerates one grain of oppression,
> His retinue will inflict a ton of misery.

was fully realised in the course of this strenuous period. For a short time after the beginning of the war, recruitment in the Punjab proceeded under normal conditions. But soon after Sir Michael O'Dwyer made up his mind to acquire the distinction of being the foremost recruiting sergeant in India, gentle pursuasion gave place to more vigorous methods. Then came the Prime Minister's appeal for increased war effort. Sir Michael O'Dwyer's energies now know no limits. In his speech in the Punjab War Conference, he said :

"You know the Delhi programme. My application of it to the Punjab I can explain in a single sentence. Two hundred thousand men for the regular army, voluntaryism if possible, conscription if necessary, twice the thousand men we have been asked for the Indian portion of the Indian Defence Force, a war loan effort which will eclipse the last, the development to the utmost of our local resources, and by God's grace, victory in the end."

These are noble words breathing a lofty patriotism for Empire. But what regard was paid to the capacity of the province to fulfil the expectations of its ruler ? At the Delhi Conference the total number of men to be supplied by India was determined to be 5,00,000. Of these, Sir Michael O'Dwyer made up his mind to find no less than 40 per cent from his own province, the population of whicn including the Indian States is only 13 per cent. It was too big an undertaking even for the martial races of the Punjab who had already contributed over 2,50,000 combatants and 70,000 non-combatants, since the commencement of the war. Hence the broad hint conveyed in the words "voluntaryism if possible, conscription if necessary." The various officials engaged in recruiting lost no time in translating those words into action and the horrors committed in the guise of patriotic effort are still fresh in the memory of the victims. An ingenious "quota system" was devised und r which a rough

census of the male population of every village was taken and each village was called upon to furnish a certain number of recruits within a fixed time. If the required number was not forthcoming within the time given various unlawful and oppressive methods were employed. Villages were punished collectively and individuals were subjected to great hardships and humiliation. I shall not here enter into any details as the Commissioners appointed by your sub-committee are enquiring into these cases of ill-treatment and will present to you their report in due course.

The Criminal Law was openly abused and numerous proceedings were taken against innocent men under the provisions of Sections 107 and 110 of the Code of Criminal Procedure with the sole object of compelling the accused persons either to enlist or to supply recruits. These are judicial records in existence showing that those who did either the one or the other were acquitted while those who did neither were convicted. In the report on the administration of Criminal Justice for 1917, it is stated :

"District Magistrates have spent much time in recruiting work during the year. The large decrease in the number of persons called upon to give security under Section 110, Criminal Procedure Code is in a great part to the heavy recruiting for the army."

In the report for 1918, it is again stated :

"Recruiting for the army continued to be one of the main factors in bad livelihood cases."

Nor was the abuse of law confined only to bad livelihood cases. The following passage occurs in the judgment of the Sessions Judge of Karnal setting aside the convictions of the appellants by the District Magistrate :

"The various orders passed by the District Magistrate from time to time clearly show that if these appellants had also supplied recruits from among their near relations or if they were fit for enlistment themselves they would have been let off provi-

ded 20 recruits were made up from the village as was originally demanded from it."

Similar methods were employed to swell the provincial contributions to the war loan. It will be interesting to prepare statistics to show how many subscribers found it necessary to transfer their war bonds at heavy discount soon after their subscriptions were announced. One of the favourite methods to deal with those who did not satisfy the authorities with their war effort either in supplying recruits or contibuting to the war loan was to enhance their income-tax. The following short extracts from the judgments of Collectors, rejecting objections to the enhancement, will be instructive :

"He (the objector) has three sons and will not enlist one of them He has not subscribed to any war fund or war loan although he could easily do so."

"Up to date he has not helped even by a single pie in any war fund or loan."

"He is a miser and has not helped with a single pie in any war fund or loan."

The inevitable result of the systematic oppression, the main features of which I have described was to spread serious discontent throughout the province and it is not surprising that the pent up feelings of the people occasionally found vent in the commission of serious offences. We have it on record that a Tahsildar in the Shahpur District was murdered and some of his companions sustained grievous hurt. In the same district a mob offered resistance to the arrest of some men on a charge of dissuading people from enlistment with the result that it was fired upon and several casualties occurred.

In a recent speech made in Multan, Sir Michael O'Dwyer expressed the lament that :

"those who worked in organising recruiting for the division have had a most arduous task; they have had to contend against apathy, timidity, and even with open hostility which in some

cases unfortunately culminated into riot, bloodshed, and defiance of authority in Multan Muzaffargarh."

Mr. Montagu in his last speech on the Indian Budget remarked :

"Recruiting for the army has gone on in parts particularly affected by these disturbances with such zeal and enthusiasm that I think there is reason to believe that many a family was left without its bread-winner."

Did Mr. Montagu sufficiently realise the inwardness of the "zeal and enthusiasm" he referred to or the extent to which it was carried ? The "unauthorised, objectionable and oppressive methods" employed by *Ziladars* and *Lambardars* under pressure of the authorities are described in the judgment of the Sessions Judge of Multan as "matters of common knowledge". It is evident that this "common knowledge" did not travel beyond the sea to England or we should have found some indication of it in Mr. Montagu's speech.

What I have so far said applies to all classes affected by recruiting and war loan activities and concerns mainly "the man on the soil, and the man behind the plough" for whom the late Lieutenant-Governor professed the warmest sympathy and solicitude. Let us now turn to another class of people for whom he never affected any feelings other than those of unqualified hatred and contempt—I mean the people known as the educated classes in general and the politically minded section of them in particular. I have already shown that public life was all but dead in the Punjab some years before Sir Michael O'Dwyer appeared on the scene. I showed some signs of revival on his assuming charge of the province but was again put down by his masterful repression. There were, however, world forces at work which even the strongest man could not resist and the people of the Punjab whose manliness, sanity, and practical common sense" the then Lieutenant Governor was never tired of extolling for his own purposes could not remain unaffected. The famous Memorandum o' 'he nineteen members of the Indian Council, the Congress-League Scheme of Constitutional Re-

powers" to enable it to deal with anarchical and revolutionary movements. Part I of the Act supersedes the ordinary mode of trial by a special procedure when the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that it is expedient in the interests of public safety to provide for a speedy trial. This speed is attained by doing away with commitment proceedings and the right of appeal which in one word means speed at the expense of justice. It is impossible to underrate the importance of commitment proceedings which give fair notice to the accused of what the case against him is, and how the prosecution seek to prove it. As to the value of the right to appeal there can be no two opinions. The most remarkable feature of the Act in this respect is that no right of appeal is given even when the Judges differ, the only consideration shown being that no sentence of death shall be passed if there is such difference of opinion.

Parts II and III are designed to deal with two classes of anarchical and revolutionary movements but the differences between them is only one of degree. Part II applies when such movements are "extensively promoted" and Part III when they are "prevalent to such an extent as to endanger public safety." But whatever the difference between the two it is impossible in any given case to show that the movement in question was of the one kind and not of the other. For all practical purposes, therefore, the Governor-General-in-Council has a free hand in the matter and may proceed under Part II or III as he likes. The fact that a person is concerned in any movement of either kind is in the first instance to be determined behind his back and, later on, when his case is referred to the investigating authority, he is to be given an opportunity to appear at some stage (not all the stages) of the proceedings, which are to be held in camera. The unfortunate person is not to be allowed to be represented by counsel, he may not be told the name of his accuser, nor even all the facts on which the accusation is based and is not entitled as a matter of right to examine any witness, or produc any documents if the investigating authority considers it unnecessary. To crown all this the investigating authority shall not be bound to observe the rules of the law of evidence and there shall be no appeal from its finding. We then have the drastic

powers given to Local Governments, which are milder under Part II than Part III but extend to the search of any place and confinement in jail of the persons concerned.

These, fellow-delegates, are some of the staggering provisions of the new law against which the whole country rightly rose as one man. Because there are unfortunately in this country, as there are in other countries, some misguided persons who endanger public safety, the whole nation must submit to the disgrace of allowing this terror to hang over it. It has been over and over again admitted that the great bulk of the population in India are law-abiding. The negation of law and justice which the Rowlatt Act represents could only be necessary to cover the inability or incompetency of the Government to cope with an evil which is by no means confined to India. The only justification pleaded is that the Act is not meant for the innocent and the law-abiding who need have no fear of its application to them. But it is conveniently forgotten that the sole judge of the innocence or guilt of any person, however high placed he may be, is the executive. And who can have faith in the executive if the safeguards imposed by law on them are removed? Our critics may, but let me tell them plainly that we do not. But it is said that there are safeguards. The Local Government cannot proceed without first obtaining the opinion of a judicial officer qualified to be a High Court Judge. The obvious answer is that in the first place that opinion to be based on one-sided evidence and in the second the Local Government is not bound by it. All it is bound to do is to consider the opinion. If this opinion is against the Government, but the latter is still satisfied that action is necessary, there is nothing in the Act to prevent it from applying either Part II or III as it likes. It is however pointed out that no Government would be unreasonable enough to disregard the opinion of the judicial officer whom it consults. After what has happened recently in the Punjab, and at different times in other parts of India, let no man ask us to put implicit faith in the reasonableness of Government measures and methods. What is possible for the Government to do it may do at any time. We cannot be satisfied until it is made impossible for it to depart from strictly consti-

tutional lines. The next safeguard relied upon is the enquiry by the "investigating authority". As you have seen from the conditions under which that enquiry is to be held, it is nothing short of an unmitigated farce and can afford no real safeguard. The last argument in favour of the Act is that it is nowhere in force and will never be put in force unless occasion arises and then only in the part of the country where such occasion arises. Here again the only determining authority is the executive though in this case it is the Governor-General-in-Council. It may be said that under the new Reform Act there will be three Indians in the Executive Council and at least they may be relied upon. But the Executive does not change its character by being Fnglish or Indian. The point is that no executive in the world, however competent it may be, has any business to usurp the jurisdiction of duly constituted law courts or deprive the people of the protection afforded by them.

Much has been said of rumours and misrepresentations of provisions of the Act. I confess that I have not come across them except in Government communiques and some police evidences before the Martial Law Commissions. It is a remarkable fact that though these rumours were supposed to have emanated from the educated classes, not a single witness was called nor a single speech produced to fix any particular person with their authorship or circulation through the C.I.D. were everywhere in evidence. Indeed, one of the popular cries in the Punjab put the main provisions of the Act in a nutshell.

No pleader, no appeal, no argument.

This is as true a description of the Act as any that can be given in six words, though the author of it has been convicted and sentenced by a Martial Law Commission.

Mr. Montagu has sought to defend this measure in his Budget speech in the House of Commons. He has resorted to special pleading and instead of justifying the principle of the Act has plunged into a consideration of the necessity to deal with anarchical crime. Political crime has to be dealt with, has to be rooted out, but I repeat, what has been said so often before,

that no number of Rowlatt Acts or other repressive measures will put an end to it. The one and only way to cast it out is to remove the causes of discontent.

The most amazing part of Mr. Montagu's defence of the Act came when on being interrupted by an Hon. member on the question of the accused being deprived of legal assistance, he said :

"Yes Sir; under Part I of the Act he has assistance, but under Parts II and III there is no legal assistance. This is not a law court but a committee of inquiry. It is more like a school master investigating trouble at a school, a committee of a club using its friendly services for the purposes of inquiry, somebody to explore all matters, somebody to see that injustice is not done, somebody to be sure that all the facts are investigated."

To compare the arrest and confinement without trial of a citizen, and numerous other restraints put on his liberty of action and speech, with the governance of a school or a club is, to say the least, adding a gross insult to a serious wrong. It can only be accounted for by the oft-repeated complaint that Mr. Montagu has recently, in his zeal to push the Reform Bill through, lost all sense of proportion of other things Indian.

For these reasons I have no hesitation in asking you to express in no uncertain terms, what I know to be your considered opinion, that the Act is an ugly blot on the Indian statute book and must be removed without delay. The issue before us is, as Mahatma Gandhi has concisely put it, "Is the will of the people to prevail or that of the Government" ? The very existence of this measure puts a stain on our self-respect and our national honour. But I feel confident that if you persist in your constitutional efforts you will get rid of it. For, as Mahatmaji says :

"A Government be it ever so powerful and autocratic is bound to yield to unanimous public opinion. It is a bad outlook before us if truth and justice have to surrender to mere physical force whether it is wielded by an individual or by a Government."

"I apologise to you, fellow-delegates, for having detained you even for the few minutes I have on the provisions of this inequitous measure. I have done so as this is the first opportunity for the Congress to pronounce its opinion on the Act and also because it marks the starting point of the recent trouble in the Punjab. I must not omit in this connection to express our keen appreciation of the high sense of public duty shown by those members of the Imperial Council who resigned their seats as a protest against the passing of the Act.

Satyagraha

The Rowlatt Bills, bad as they were, were made even worse and more unacceptable to us by the environment in which they were set. Mahatma Gandhi rightly pointed out that they were "the unmistakable symptoms of the deep-seated disease in the governing body"—a disease which soon after broke out in all its virulence and naked ugliness. To fight this disease, Mahatma Gandhi started the great Satyagraha movement. A new force was introduced into our politics, a force with the most tremendous potentialities. India's masses were suddenly awakened and the message of Satyagraha entered the humblest home. Some of us did not entirely agree with the wording of the Satyagraha pledge, many were of opinion that the time had not come for civil disobedience. But few, I imagine, can disagree with the essentials of the doctrine. These, as I conceive them, are truth, fearlessness and non-violence. And, as a corollary, I would add that it is the right of every man to refuse to obey any law which goes against his conscience, and to which he cannot with due regard to truth submit, and to suffer the consequences for such disobedience. This is specially so where the laws are passed against the will of the people. I would here refer you to what an eminent American has said. Mr. Hadley, President of the Yale University, says :

"You can compel ignorant people to accept a statute, you can force bad men to obey it when they do not want to; but if a statute or a judicial decision passes the line of those duties which good and intelligent men as body accept and impose upon

themselve, it is at once nullified. The process of nullifying law has sometimes been called passive resistance."

The qualities I have mentioned above, whether you call them Satyagraha or by any other name, are essential if we are to take out rightful place amongst the nations of the world. We shall not be free or deserve freedom unless we have these qualities in ample measure. Unless we adhere to truth and discard fear we cannot get rid of the slave psychology, the outcome of generations of repression, which has been our sad inheritance. And violence cannot avail us. That is the special weapon of the West and we cannot hope to win freedom by armed force. But even if we could do so it would be a barren victory, a victory which would degrade and coarsen us and make us less fit to enjoy the freedom we had so won. We would develop the same vices against which we are contending now and in our turn would start the game of repression.

The spirit of Satyagraha was nobly shown by the great and peaceful demonstration of the 6th of April. That day must remain a red letter day for India. It was the greatest event of the year. Some persons, ignorant of history and Indian tradition, have likened the *hartal* to the general strike after the manner of the West, and have called it the foreunner of riot bloodshed. But the *hartal* in India is a spiritual weapon, the old time method of showing sorrow, of having grievances redressed by patient suffering. It has from time immemorial been resorted to express grief at a national calamity, sorrow at the loss of a loved citizen. It is not used as a threat, nor as a weapon against the forces of law and order. And this was fully shown on the Satyagraha Day when the mighty demonstration passed off peacefully without the slightest conflict with the police or military.

Some words of Mahatma Gandhi have been distorted to mean that the Satyagraha movement was the cause of the disturbances in India. Fellow-delegates, I say most emphatically that this was not so. Neither Satyagraha nor the *hartal* was the cause except in so far as they greatly displeased the authorities and made them provoke the people. There was no civil

disobedience of laws in the Punjab. Satyagraha flourished more in other parts of the country and yet there was no disturbance there. The hartals of the 6th April did not cause any breach of the peace. It was only after two popular leaders of this city had been suddenly deported and Mahatma Gandhi, the most revered Indian of the day, had been arrested, that the passions of the populace broke loose in certain parts of the country. That would have been so even without Satyagraha or *hartal*. The disturbances were the result of the action of the authorities. They knew full well, in the Punjab at least, the consequence of their provocative action would lead to trouble and they took measures accordingly.

Martial Law and After

The events which followed must be fresh in your memory. Martial Law was enforced and for long the Punjab was almost cut off from the rest of the world. The truth was hidden from us and we had to rely on the one-sided accounts presented by Government for our benefit. Outsiders were not permitted to enter the charmed area, even Mr. Andrews being turned out of the province. Within a few days of the declaration of Martial Law, the All-India Congress Committee demanded a full and impartial enquiry, and a little later appointed a Sub-Committee to conduct an enquiry. This Sub-Committee laboured for months and collected a great deal of evidence. It was hoped to present this evidence to the official committee which had been announced.

Lord Hunter's Committee

The appointment by the Government of India of Lord Hunter's Committee was most disappointing, but we waived our substantial objections to it and decided to co-operate provided only full facilities were given to us to represent the people's case. At the earliest possible opportunity we urged upon the Government that the presence of the Punjabee leaders, who were in Jail, was necessary for a fair enquiry. For many days we were in frequent communication with the Punjab Government and we were led to believe that our requests were being

favourably considered by them. We refrained from going to the press in order to avoid embarrassing the Government and waited patiently for their answer. That answer came on the eve of the Hunter Committee's arrival in Lahore. You must have seen the correspondence subsequent to this and our Sub-Committee's statement which have already appeared in the papers, and I can add but little. I would only point out to you that we tried to meet the Government as much as possible. We modified our original request for the release of all the leaders during the enquiry and agreed to the presence of only one or two of them at a time in a custody before Lord Hunter's Committee while evidence relating to them was being given. That was all we wanted and which the Government finally refused to give us. It was not an extravagant request. Even criminals have a right to be present in court during their trial. The Punjabee leaders are not being tried in the technical sense but their actions are being judged, they are being attacked by official witnesses and much of the blame and responsibility for the disturbances is being cast on them. Yet they were not allowed the privilege of the meanest criminal, although the officials of Government, who are as much on their trial and have at least as much to answer for, have had the fullest opportunities of appearing before the Committee and conducting their case. Some of these officials have even been allowed the advantages of giving their evidence in camera. After the most anxious consideration, the Sub-Committee came to the conclusion that "*if* it was to discharge the trust laid upon it, *if* it was to vindicate the national honour and the honour of the great Punjabee leaders, *if* it was to see truth and innocence established, it could not possibly engage in an enquiry in which the people's party was so heavily handicapped."

I feel confident that you will approve of and endorse the action your Sub-Committee took, and trust to its judgment in taking all necessary steps to obtain justice.

Meanwhile, Lord Hunter's Committee has pursued the even tenor of its way, roused occasionally by some particularly callous official admission. Their findings can but be ex parte de-

cisions, based on the evidence of one party only. The other side of the shield will be presented to you by the Commissioners appointed by your Sub-Committee, who have strenuously laboured to collect and sift the evidence for the people. I do not overlook the fact that the proceedings of your Commissioners are in the legal sense as ex parte as those of Lord Hunter's Committee. There is however this to be said that your Commissioners have the additional advantage of considering the evidence given before the Hunter Committee. They have for good reasons deferred publishing their report and the evidence on which it will be based and this Congress will not have the advantage of having their considered opinion on the Punjab occurrences before it. This has also considerably handicapped me as in the absence of your Commissioner's report, it is somewhat difficult for me to deal with some aspects of Material Law.

But whatever findings the Commissioners appointed by the Congress Sub-Committee may arrive at, the central facts of the recent tragic events have now become so crystallised as to enable us to form an adequate idea of the true nature of the horrors through which the Punjab has just passed. These central facts are now matters of common knowledge and emerge clearly obove the few controversial points which we in this Congress are concerned with is not so much the fixing of individual responsibility for particular acts as the ascertainment of the spirit which runs through them all. I shall now by your leave touch on some of the main incidents and broad features of the occurrences which clearly indicate the spirit with which the people on the one side and the administration on the other were actuated.

Amritsar

I shall take the case of Amritsar which stands out more prominently than any other as affording in itself a complete illustration of the spirit on either side.

The people of Amritsar observed the 6th of April in the true *Satyagraha* spirit. So they did also the 9th April, the *Ram Naumi* day, and Mohammedans gladly and eagerly joined their Hindu brethern in celebrating the festival. There was no vio-

inner significance of Satyagraha or the *hartal*. To them it was all a vast conspiracy, the forerunner of a second mutiny. They did not care to see what troubled the people, they did not search for the cause of this mighty movement. They looked upon the closing of shops and the meetings and the demonstrations as a personal insult to them. Even the fraternisation of Hindus and Muslims was anathema, an act in the great conspiracy. We all know that it is in this country for a body of men to walk bare-headed and bare-footed. It is the sign of deep grief, a token of a great calamity. But our rulers neither understand nor care to study the feelings and emotions of those whom they took upon as a subject race. In his evidence before Lord Hunter'e Committee, Mr Miles Irving, who was Deputy-Commissioner of Amritsar at the time, was asked about the people who were proceeding to his house on the 10th. He stated :

"Yes, they were coming to my house, I understood They were coming not to make any ordinary protest. When people come, they come properly clad, but these men had put off their *pugrees* and shoes and they intended violence."

Question—It might have been the sign of mourning ?
Answer—If it was mourinng, it was violence mourning.

So Mr. Miles Irving, after a life-time spent in the Indian Civil Service, thinks that the taking off of turbans and shoes is a sign of coming violence. Ignorance of the habits of a people is never excusable in one whose duty it is to govern them. It becomes criminal when it leads to grave consequences.

The sudden deportation of Dr. Kitchlew and Satyapal was a typical act of our administrators. Having convinced themselves that there was revolution in the air, that conspiracies were being hatched, that the wonderful calm of the 6th and 9th of April hid strange currents underneath, they took the only step which appeals to the mind of a bureaucrat. They knew that this would greatly upset the people, they knew that there might be trouble, but what matter ? Could they not crush them with the "ample resources" at their disposal ? It did not strike them that the people could be reasoned with or could be conciliated. Nor did

country. They do not believe in the intricacies or the delays of the law. They believe in making themselves the judges and meeting out swift and stern justice to their opponents.

The Jallianwala Bagh

But saddest and most revealing of all was the great tragedy which occurred here on the *Vaisakhi* day. No Indian and no true Englishman can hear the story of the *Khuni Bagh*, as it is now aptly called, without a sickening feeling of horror. Our friend Mr. C.F. Andrews, to whom this province and our country is so much indebted, has described it "as a cold and calculated massacre". He says : "I have gone into every single detail with all the care and thoroughness that a personal investigation could command and it remains to me an unspeakable disgrace, indefensible, unpardonable, inexcusable." Such is the verdict of an Englishman. What words, fellow-delegates, can I use to express your feelings and mine whose kith and kin were mercilessly shot down by the hundred in cold blood ? Well may we grieve in the words of the Persian poet—

Our country is flooded with sorrow and woe;
O, for our land woe;
Arise and for coffin and cerements go;
O, for our land woe;
With the blood of our men killed in this pursuit
The moon shines red;
Hill, plain, and garden blood-red glow;
O, for our land woe.

The facts of this incident are before you, they have largely been admitted by the authorities. But I am not aware of any condemnation from the authorities. I do not know of any high official who has protested against this grim occurrence. That is a revelation of offiical mentality which staggers me. General Dyer, the author of the deed, has almost boasted of his achievement. He has sought to justify it. To him it was a "merciful act" to fire without warning on an inoffensive crowd because it might have made fun of him if he had refrained from doing so.

they think of having recourse to the ordinary law courts of the He admits that he could have dispersed it without firing but that would have been derogatory to his dignity as a defender of law and order. And so, in order to maintain his self-respect, he thought it his duty to "fire and fire well" till his ammunition was exhausted and 2,000 persons lay dead and wounded. There ended his duty. It was none of his business, he tells us, to look after the dead and wounded. It was no one's business. The defenders of law and order had won a great victory, they had crushed the great rebellion. What more was needed ?

This is the deed which received the benedictions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. This is the deed which has been defended by official after official before Lord Hunter's Commitee. The plea of necessity is raised, the plea that the massacre produced a good effect on the surroundjng districts. We have heard of these excuses before when Lovain was razed to the ground, when atrocities were committed at Dinant and Termonde. For these crimes against humanity the ex-Kaiser and his underlings are going to be tried. But General Dyer is secure. His late chief blessed him, and his colleagues in the civil and military administration of this country stand by him and applaud his deed.

Crawling

The shooting in the Jallianwala Bagh was not the only feat which General Dyer performed. His subsequent conduct was no less revealing of his perverted state of mind. He tells us that he "searched his brain" for a new punishment, a new terror for the people—something, as General Hudson put it in the Imperial Council, to "strike the imagination'. And the punishment that was devised did credit to General Dyer's ingenuity and ferocity. It was worthy of the days of the Inquisition. All Indians who happened to pass through a certain lane were forced to crawl on their bellies like worms. This was the punishment meted out to all innocent and peaceful men who went that way and why ? Because some hooligans and attached Miss Sherwood in the lane some days before No better method could have been devised to humble the people to the dust.

Of the other measures taken in Amritsar by General Dyer—

the flogging in public places, the enforced salaaming (saluting), treatment of the best and most respected citizens—I shall not say much. They all tell the same tale of brutal terrorism, the attempt to crush the spirit of the people.

Lahore

Then we come to Lahore. General Dyer was not the only apostle of this cult. There were many others who tried to rival his exploits in the other districts under Martial Law. Lieutenant Colonel Frank Johnson, the expert from Bechuanaland, pursued the policy of "thoroughness" in the Lahore area. A "false and malicious" rumour that the Government intended to interfere with the marriage customs of the people was contradicted by an official communique from Simla and the contradiction was given due publicity. The rumour was set down as a base lie and a Mohammedan marriage was arranged in a village not far from Lahore. It so happened that the whole marriage party, including the bridegroom, the priests and the guests were flogged for having dared to assemble together during the Martial Law days. Colonel Johnson has now been pleased to express his regret for his flogging and to tell us that it was due to the absence of tact in the official concerned. He himself exercised this "blessed virtue" (this virtue of tact) by arresting 500 students and the professors of the Sanatan Dharma College and confining them in the fort because a Martial Law notice was damaged by some unknown persons. He welcomed the opportunity of doing so he "was looking for it". He tells us that he was waiting for an opportunity to bring home to the people the powers of Martial Law. To him a walk of 16 miles daily for the students for three weeks in the scorching Lahore sun of April and May was no hardship. It was "ordinary physical training of a mild form". But perhaps the most noticeable example of the tact and mentality of Colonel Johnson was his order prohibiting more than two Indians from walking abreast. He tells us :

"If more than two natives come and do not give way to a European, that is likely to lead to breach of the peace."

Question—Who would commit the breach of the peace, the European ?

Answer—Undoubtedly.

Question—You think he would be justified in doing so ?

Answer—Certainly.

And yet we are told of equal partnership in the Empire and are asked to rejoice over the peace which has given this to us.

Gujranwala

In Gujranwala, Colonol O'Brien held sway, serene in the knowledge that he could do what he wished without let or hindrance. The Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government had assured him, even prior to Martial Law, that his actions would be subsequently validated. This simple fact furnishes a more illuminating commentary on the new Indemnity Act than all the learned arguments of Sir George Lowndes in the Imperial Council. We can now understand the whole-hearted support given to the measure by the Hon'ble the Chief-Secretary to the Punjab Government and appreciate the wisdom of the provision in the Act which throws on the complainant the burden of proving want of good faith in the accused official when he is armed with a cerificate from a Secretary to the Government.

One of the steps taken by Col. O'Brien on the assurance of the Chief Secretary was to arrest Gauhar Singh, a lambardar, aged 60 years. Col. O'Brien states :

"Gauhar Singh himself had committed no offence but his two sons were wanted by the police and they were not forthcoming and that was why their old father was arrested. He told us that he did not know where his sons had gone. An order was also passed confiscating his property. The order stated that until the arrest of Gauhar Singh's sons his property would be confiscated, that he be dismissed from the post of lambardar, and any one touching his property or cutting his crops would be shot." No comment from me is necessary.

In Gujranwala, as you are all aware, the gentle art of bombing from aeroplanes was practised, a bomb being actually dropped on a school boarding house full of boys. The manner in which bombs were dropped may be gathered from Lt. Dodkin's statement. He says :

"I saw 20 or 30 people in a field talking to one another, and dropped bombs on them. I did not know who they were, whether they had assembled for an unlawful porpose, but I bombed as my orders were to disperse crowds."

Another part of this district has come to be known as the Bosworth Smith area in memory of the horrors it underwent under the rule of member of the Indian Civil Service who for year past was in disgrace with the Punjab Government but was selected as specially qualified to administer Martial Law Justice, and has since been rewarded by promotion.

Kasur

In Kasur, Capt. Doveton evolved fancy and novel punishments for the people and sought to teach them how to observe the ancient customs of India by touching the ground with their foreheads. He also had men stripped and flogged in the presence of prostitutes. His brother officer Lt.-Col. MacRae meanwhile amused himself by having school boys flogged in public in order to set an example to all evil-doers. The bigger boys were picked out at random, perhaps because they could bear the whipping better. They were not guilty of any offence, "it was their misfortune" ? Col. MacRae tells us, and I take it that the punishment he awarded was in good faith. All the male inhabitants, boys and men, ten thousand in number, had to present themselves for the identification parade. The men arrested, 150 in number, were put in a cage placed on the station platform, and a public gallows was erected, entirely at the instance of the Punjab Government, before any one was tried or condemned to death—so Col. MacRae informs us.

Hiudu-Muslim Unity

Besides the attempt to terrorise the people, the Punjab

officials aimed a blow at the most valuable asset of our political life, the union between Hindus and Mohammedans. You are aware, fellow-delegates, of the pathetic scenes of fraternisation between Hindus and Muslims which took place during the recent disturbances at Delhi, Lahore and other places accompanied with shouts of Hindu Musalman ki jai. These expressions of fellowship in a common trouble were treated by the Punjab officials as heinous crimes amounting to open rebellion and waging was against the king, and a new offence was created which was defined as "fraternization of Hindus and Mohammedans against the Government by law established". One of the most shameful acts of the Martial Law authorities was to ridicule the Hindu-Muslim entente publicly in various ways. The admission of Hindus to the Mohammedan mosques and of Mohammedans to the Hindu temples, the drinking of water or *sherbut* from out of the same glass by Hindus and Mohammedans were unmistakable signs of a far deeper union of the two than could be looked upon with equanimity by those who are interested in keeping them apart. And an attempt was made under official inspiration during the closing days of Martial Law to found separate political associations or *Sabhas* for Hindus, Mohammedans and Sikhs. I do not know what progress has been made in this direction but I trust that my fellow-countrymen of all communities will refrain from swallowing this fatal bait.

I have referred you, fellow-delegates, to a very few of the admitted facts. It is not possible for me here to go into all the harrowing details of the numerous atrocities committed in the name of law and order. For these you will have to wait for the report of your Commissioners and the evidence they are collecting. Meanwhile I would beg of you to read carefully the evidence which has been tendered before Lord Hunter's Committee. I would request you to note the overbearing attitude of the official witnesses and their arrogance to the Indian members of the Committee. That will give you a greater insight into the official mind than any words of mine can convey. That will give you some idea of what our brethren in the Punjab have had to go through. And I would have you remember that these very

men were the officers who presided over the Martial Law Summary Courts, who dispensed justice and inflicted heavy punishments and flogging.

Necessity for Martial Law

The question of the necessity or otherwise of the application of Martial Law to the situation which arose in April last is a question on which also we must await the considered opinion of our Commissioners on all the evidence taken by them and that tendered before Lord Hunter's Committee. The Government case has been put as high as it possibly could be before the latter so far as the opinion of the authorities as to the real nature of the disturbances, and their apprehensions at the time as to what they might eventually lead to, are concerned. The point is whether their opinions and apprehensions were based on facts or were the result of panic. I shall abstain from embarrassing either our own Commissioners or Lord Hunter's Committee by offering at this stage any definite opinion of my own for your acceptance. But I think I am fully within my rights in pointing out that the question is not so much whether there was necessity for the application of Martial Law at any time as whether it was necessary when it was actually applied. It may be that Martial Law could be justified if it had been introduced at the time when the disturbances were actually going on, but it is an admitted fact that it was not so applied. What was done was to call on the military to help the civil administration, which is well within the discretion of every magistrate under our Criminal Law, but is very different from Martial Law. Whether or not it was necessary to hand over the entire civil administration to the military on the dates on which the Martial Law Ordinances and notifications relating to each district were issued is the real question before your Commissioners as well as Lord Hunter's Committee. I shall content myself with laying before you the official view. Mr. Kitchin, the Commissioner of Lahore Division, has stated that Martial Law was not wanted for the purpose of recovering control but in order to prevent the spread of infection, and specially for the speedy trial of the numerous persons who had been arrested. Mr. Miles Irving tells ns the necessity for the continuance of Martial Law did not

depend on anything that happened in his district. It depended on outside factors, on the situation on the frontier. General Dyer tells us that the city of Amritsar was "a model of law and order" after the 13th April.

Whatever the finding of your Commissioners and Lord Hunter's Committee as to the initial necessity for Martial Law may be, there is not the slightest doubt, on the admissions made by the official witnesses before Lord Hunter's Committee, that there was absolutely no justification for keeping it in force for the unconscionable length of time during which its horrors continued to be perpetrated. Admittedly it was not required to maintain law and order and the only justification pleaded, besides the old story of the dangers arising from the proximity of the frontier, is that it enabled the offenders to be brought to speedy justice. But the Government had ample powers under the statute law to constitute special tribunals for the trial of offenders and these would not have taken much longer to dispose of the cases than the Martial Commissions and Summary Courts did. The only difference would have been that people would have been saved from the sufferings and indignities to which they were subjected under the cover of Martial Law and that the accused would have had the advantage of defending themselves by counsel of their choice. The trend of the whole official evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee is that Martial Law was not required to meet the immediate necessities of the administration but merely for the purpose of striking terror into the hearts of the people, so as to avoid possible trouble in the fature. I am of course not aware what secrets of State have been imparted to the Hunter Committee in camera by the Chief Secretary to the Punjab Govrnment and General Hudson. But so far the open proceedings before the Committee go, I can affirm with confidence that it was a gross abuse of Martial Law for which all concerned are liable to answer.

Martial Law Cases

I do not intend discussing any of the hundreds of cases disposed of by the Martial Law Commissions and the Summary

and Area Courts. They have caused the greatest misery to the people, the suffering which endures for months. Hundreds have remained in jail, many for having done what no honest man need be ashamed of. Today I am happy to say for many this suffering has ended. You will have some idea of the sentences inflicted when I tell you that 108 persons were sentenced to death and the aggregate sentences of imprisonment amounted to the stupendous total of 7,371 years and 5 months (allowing 20 years for a sentence of transportation for life). The figures for whippings, forfeitures, fines and impositions on villages and towns are not yet fully available. Those I have given for imprisonments have been compiled from the official statements presented to the Imperial Council. I am told that even these figures are incomplete and that the official statements do not contain many cases. Many of these sentences have been largely reduced by the present Lieutenant-Governor. Clemency was shown where justice was needed. Injustice cannot be tempered with mercy. Sir Edward Maclagan is a kindly gentleman who has tried to mitigate the rigours of his predecessor's regime but he has not had the courage or the wisdom to break through the evil traditions he has inherited.

Sir Michael O' Dwyer's Responsibility

Such, in briest outline, is the story of the Punjab. The responsibility of Sir Michael O, Dwyer for much that occurred here is admitted and established beyond doubt. I have endeavoured to show you the whole trend of this administration. It would appear that he was striving to make the Punjab a kind of Ulster in relation to the rest of India, a bulwark of reaction against all reform. "We now seem to be drifting into what is known as Birrellism in Ireland", he complained, "trucking to the extremists, encouraging the idea that we are going to hand over the administration to them." And even in his memorandum on the reforms he could not help lamenting that the Punjab politicians, "hitherto quiescent, were encouraged to assert themselves, and to come into line with other Provinces." To him there was little difference between a constitutional agitator and an anarchist. For both he had the same remedy—repression. But the remedy

failed him and but increased the disease. And then he played his mastercard and brought in Martial Law to kill once for all the breed that agitates. He has failed again in his endeavour, but his policy has resulted in death for many and in utmost misery for thousands. For that he is fully responsible. He is respons ble for the actions of General Dyer and his military colleagues in Amritsar; he is also responsible for the doings of his subordinates in the other districts under Martial Law.

Lord Chelmsford's Responsibility

But what shall we say of Lord Chelmsford? He must have known, or ought to have known, what was happening in the Punjab. The Congress Committee repeatedly drew his attention to it. Did he seek to interfere or cut short the agony? Has he received or considered any representation from this afflicted province presented to him from any sources which are not strictly official? Has he shown us any sympathy? Has be even been into the heart of the province to acquaint himself by personal enquiry on the spot concerning the tragedies which have taken place? We have not even heard that his "heart has bled for Amritsar". Lord Chelmsford occupies a very exalted position. He has received that position at the hands of his King and as a trust from the English people. How has he served his King and fulfilled this trust? Has he faithfully and adequately discharged his duty to his King and to his fellow-countrymen by his persistent refusal to listen or to interfere, by his aloofness and by his absence from the scene of these happenings, when hundreds of His Maj sty's subjects were done to death by the military and thousands but to shameful indignity?

Englishmen are, I believe, proud of the justice of British rule and zealous of their reputation. May I not ask them to consider whether Lord Chelmsford has shown himself an active guardian of their honour and worthy of the trust which they had reposed in him? Indians seek for justice at the hands of the British Democracy. Will they tolerate this "frightfulness" in India and shield the authors of it? That is the acid test of British

policy in India. On the answer to that depends the future good will of the Indian people.

The Lesson of the Punjab

Fellow-delegates, I have ventured to trespass on your time to a considerable extent in dealing with the Punjab and the other matters which have acquired a special significance on account of the recent disturbances. Much has of late been said and written about the Punjab, much still remains. But the lessons which the crowded events of the year have to teach us and the English people are clear. To us they point to the path of steadfast endeavour, the path of sacrifice and patient ordeal. That is the only way to reach our goal. To Englishmen they teach the oft-repeated truth that tyranny degrades those who exercise it as much as those who suffer under it. And so it is that England of old, the champion of liberty, assumes a different guise in parts of her own dominions. England went to war to fight for the freedom of small nationalities, and yet a big nation under her sway continues to be unfree. In Belgium, the German doings were condemned, but in India we still have the pure milk of Prussianism And the men governed by the Prussian idea is much the same whether he is in the west or in the east.

The logic of force is the only argument which appeals to him; military necessity justifies all severities. The object is always to strike terror and an act however "frightful" appears to him "merciful". Ordinary morality and humanity do not influence him and cruelty itself becomes laudable. It is for England to learn the lesson and put an end to conditions which permit these occurrences in her own dominions. If our lives and honour are to remain at the mercy of an irresponsible executive and military, if the ordinary rights of human beings are denied to us, then all talk of reform is a mockery. Constitutional reform without free citizenship is like rich attire on a dead body. Better to breathe God's free air in rags than be a corpse in the finest raiment.

The Government of India Act

I shall now proceed to consider the new Reforms Act which has just been ushered into an expectant world after much travail and bitter controversy. We have been told by its sponsors in Parliment that it is a great measure, unique in English history, and that it gives us extensive powers. Some of our country men have welcomed it with open arms, others have concemned it. It is for this Congress now to consider it and formulate the country's verdict.

It has to be remembered that the situation which this Congress has to deal with is very different to what it was when the Special and Delhi Congresses met last year. Those Congresses had various schemes and proposals before them and it was open to them to accept such as appealed to them in the best interests of the country and reject others. The Montagu-Chelmsford proposals have now blossomed into an Act of Parliament and we must approach its provisions with all the respect due to the expressed will of Parliament which has been assented to by the Sovereign. The passing of the Act and the prospect of its being put int operation at an early date impose upon us here assembled the duty of examining its provisions with a view to laying down the policy for the country and the working of the electoral, political and administrative machinery, old and new. It does not, however, impose upon the Congress the duty to accept, nor does it confer upon the Congress the power to reject the measures which Parliament has decided to introduce and carry out. In my humble opinion neither the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee nor the proceedings of Parliament when it enacted the Bill into law furnish any reason for the Congress to reconsider and revise the verdict it gave last year on the true requirements of the country. In certain respects those requirements have been partially met, in others they have not been given the weight due to them either for reasons which do not appeal to us or for no reasons at all. The Act is not based on the wishes of the people of India and its provision fall short of the minimum demands made by the Congress. But let us not belittle the good that the Act does us. We must recognise that

it gives us some power and opens out new avenues of service for us which had hitherto been closed to Indians. I venture to think that our clear duty in these circumstances is to make the most of what we have got and at the same time to continue to press for what is our due. As Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has said :

> "Take advantage of whatever reforms are introduced into the Government of the country; lay down a fuller and a juster programme for the nation and let every one concerned know that you consider yourselves bound by none of the provisions to which you have taken exception, and go on using your influence to get what you want."

Mr. Montagu has laboured strenuously for us and we must express our appreciation of his work and his sincere desire to advance our national aspiration. He has expressed the apprehension that agitation would not hasten the transference of power but might delay it. Lord Middleton in the House of Lords has gone further and declared that "the continuance of agitation in order to obtain further concessions would be absolutely fatal to the future of India." We cannot share Mr. Montagu's apprehensions because of the faith in us, and as for Lord Middleton's warning we may ignore it in the assurance that the future of India does not rest in his Lordship's hands. In the course of the same debate Lord Meston was able from his own personal experience to assure the House of Lords that the "agitation in India was only evidence of something deeper. The spirit of nationalism bred in the soul and nurtured by our methods and our example lay below the whole political movement in India today. That spirit was spreading rapidly through all classes." This spirit of nationalism cannot rest content unless all our demands were acceded to. Therefore, I would beg of you to work the new reforms, utilise them for the betterment of the country and continue to press and agitate for our full demands.

The Declaration of Rights

The Act, as I have said, gives us some power, but it does not

give us free citizenship or the power to check the misuse by the executive of the functions of law and order. This demand was clearly formulated by the Special Congress at Bombay and it was reiterated at Delhi last year. Subsequent events have but emphasised the necessity for it. No constitution can meet our needs unless it is accompanied with a guarantee and a clear declaration of our elementary rights which have recently been so ruthlessly violated in the Punjab. No Indian can be blind to the fact that the protection of our fundamental civic liberties is a matter of the most urgent consequence. No statesman can shut his eyes to the supreme moral necessity of securing the faith of the Indian people in the inviolability of their rights of citizenship.

Our demand for a Declaration of Rights was placed before the Parliamentary Joint Committee. It was ably pressed before them by our deputation, but the Committee did not give it even the courtesy of a brief notice in their report. We are thus left in the dark as to the reasons why this most natural demand has not been acceded to.

Without these rights, as some of the most distinguished publicists in England have stated recently in a manifesto : "British freedom is a mockery." It is obvious that all these traditional rights have been set at nought in India by the combined operation of the Indian D.O.R.A., the numerous repressive measures on our statute book and the cult of Martial Law.

History teaches us that wherever the liberties of a people have been placed at the mercy of an executive possessing the power to enact all the laws it wanted, the advent of self-government has been preceded or accompanied by a statutory declaration of rights. This is what we find in most of the continental constitutions of Europe and in the American constitution. Even in respect of India, the British Parliament has in the past expressed a desire to protect the fundamental liberties of the people. As early as 1883, when Parliament first set itself to reconstitute the Indian legislature, it specifically limited the power of this body by a historic clause, the full meaning of which has often been ignored

by the Indian Government and the Indian courts. The Indian legislature, it declared, is to have no power "to make any law affecting the authority of Parliament or any part of the ancient laws of the constitution of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland whereon may depend in any degree the allegiance of any person to the Crown of the United Kingdom." But notwithstanding this, the steady tendency of the executive in India has been to ignore the implications of this limitation of the Indian Legislature. The Congress has rightly therefore been on its guard against this danger which lay in the proposals for reform.

In considering these proposals and in suggesting modifications to them, it has insisted upon one essential condition, that whatever the scheme of reforms may be, it should incude as an indispensable part thereof a Declaration of Indian Rights. Judging from Indian conditions alone, it is imperative for this Congress to state, that without a repeal of the existing repressive law and a guarantee of the future inviolability of our civic rights, no reforms in the constitutional machinery of the country can be regarded as satisfying our immediate requirements. They will not lessen the risks or the rigours of any future reign of terror, that might at any time be inaugurated in the country by a panic-stricken executive.

It has been said that a demand for the declaration of Indian rights is unsupported by constitutional precedent within the Empire and inconsistent with a demand for full Home Rule. But we are still very far from full Home Rule, even under the new dispensation, and the bureaucratic agents of Parliament in India would still be having practically uncontrolled exercise of the power to suspend and suppress civic liberties.

General

Coming to the provisions of the new Act, we find that a considerable part of this measure is in the nature of a blank cheque. The filling up of this cheque is left to the Executive Government of India, subject to the supervision of the Secretary

of State. This process may make or mar whatever benefits are intended to be conferred by the very large number of proposals which are subject to the extensive rule-making powers provided under the Act. There are yet further commissions or committees to come, and further investigations to be made in order to settle details. It is on the completion of this work that the Act will be fully put in operation.

Announcement of August 20th

The Joint Committee of the Houses of Parliament have, no doubt, made improvements in some of the provisions of the original Bill. But, as they themselves declare, they have definitely accepted the substantial parts of the Bill and of the scheme of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report which it embodied, as conceived in the spirit and as interpreting with "scrupulous accuracy" the policy of His Majesty's Government, announced on the 20th August 1917. The Congress at Calcutta in 1917 pronounced the country's view on the policy of this announcement, the Special Congress in Bombay in August 1918 voiced our opinion on the Reform Report scheme, while the Delhi Congress in December last, at the conclusion of the great war, declared the demands of the country for freedom, justice and self-determination. But every stage of evolution of this constitutional enactment, the right of the people of India or of the Congress to have the guiding voice in the settlement of their own self-governing institutions has not only been ignored, but has been definitely declared not to exist.

The Joint Committee of Parliament who, it was hoped would improve the spirit of the Bill, took as narrow a view of new dispensation, and the bureaucratic agents of Parliament in India would still be in practically uncontrolled exercise of the power to spend and suppress civic liberties. But even if India gets full Home Rule within the Empire, it is difficult to see why a Declaration of Indian Rights should necessarily be considered inconsistent with the demand for full legislative powers for the Indian assemblies. It is true that many British constitutions conferring full responsible government, the need of specific

guarantees has not been felt owing to the protection afforded by the great principles flowing from the rule of Common Law I have referred to above. But in cases where it was found that the tendency of the executive to encroach upon fundamental liberties was pronounced, the necessity of imposing limitations on the powers of even such responsible legislatures has been recognised and acted upon. I shall here only cite the latest example of this kind, which occurred when the late Liberal Government passed the Irish Home Rule Act. Section 4 of this Act provides, among other things :

"The powers of the Irish Legislation should not extend to the making of any new law...whereby any person may be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, or may be denied the equal protection of the laws, or whereby private property may be taken without just compensation."

Any law made in contravention of this section shall be void.

It may be stated in this connection that the American Commonwealth has made a special feature of this Declaration of Rights, both in the Federal and in the State Constitutions. At the time when the Federal Constitution was originally framed, at the conclusion of the War of Independence, the proposal to embody a Declaration of Rights in the Constitution was discussed. This was given up owing to the delay involved in settling its terms in time for the Convention, but within a few years the necessity for doing so became apparent and the constitution was so amended as to include the Declaration of Rights. The terms of the declaration are far wider than those asked for by the Indian National Congress, which in fact has only adopted some of the important clauses of that section in the American Constitution.

The latest and the most instructive instance is that of the Philippines. The United States have not only conferred self-advancement of the Indian people. The Joint Committee have acted on the assumption that the Bill is only intended to give the Indian people an opportunity, "a generous opportunity",

whatever that may mean of learning the actual business of Government. Their constant anxiety has been to preserve as the essential feature of the Bill, the guardianship of the peace and the responsibility for the duties of administration during this period in the hands of the Governor-General-in-Council.

This has seriously affected the attempts, which they have in other ways made to remove defects in the original scheme of the Bill. I shall refer only to a few examples in this connection.

Grand Committees and Legislation by Ordinance

The plan proposed in the original Bill was to empower the Governor or Governor-General to certify what he deemed essential proposals of legislation or essential supplies and to get them enacted or passed through the machinery of an official bloc. The machinery was to consist of a Grand Committee in the provinces and of the Council of State in the Central Legislature. This plan was found so reactionary and objectionable that the Joint Committee rightly decided on finally abandoning it. This is a matter of some satisfaction to the Congress and its deputation who laid stress on the positively retrogressive character of this part of the scheme. Lord Meston had finally to acknowledge that the institution of Grand Committees would, in fact, reduce in certain respects some of the existing powers of the present Provincial Councils. It was indeed believed, until the Joint Committee's Report was actually published that the alternative machinery which would be set up for the purpose of securing emergency or essential legislation or supplies would be a somewhat extended variation of what the Congress actually proposed at the Special Session in Bombay in 1918, *viz.*, that of making temporary Ordinances. The Moderates' deputation had, however, expressed their willingness to support the original Grand Committee and the Council of State scheme. The *London Times* which made a forecast of the report before it was issued, stated the position in the following terms :

"The alternative in contemplation is to give a wider range to the power residing in the Governor-General, in cases of emergency

to make ordinances which have the force of law for a period of not more than six months. During this time, if permanence were deemed necessary, the Bill would again come before the Provincial Legislature, and in the event of a second rejection the question would be referred to the Secretary of State, who would take the advice thereon of the Parliamentary Select Committee. This would mean much coming to London of Indian deputations to give evidence or influence opinion, and would operate in a sense against the principle, at the root of self-government, that Indian affairs should be decided as far as possible in India. But the politicians tell us that that principle cannot be too dogmatically applied so long as the Executive can on occasion disregard the Legislature. It is desirable to see the detail of the plan before definite opinions are formed as to its merits compared with the Grand Committee method. But this, at least, may be said : wherever in the British Dominions the Executive is in a permanent minority in the Legislature, essential laws are secured through ordinance-making powers, and the final decision as to their permanence rests with His Majesty's Government in London, usually through the agency of the Secretary of State for the Colonies."

In spite of such considerations, the Joint Committee finally decided to give power to the head of the Indian Executive to enact permanent laws, without even a definite prior sanction by the Secretary of State and subject only to his subsequent ratification or disallowance. The final proposals in this behalf that have now received Parliamentary assent are bound to cause dis appointment over the whole country.

Fellow-delegates, much as I appreciate the abondonment of the Grand Committee and of the original plan for the Constitution of the Council of State, much as I value the passing away of the fictitious and unreal procedure therein involved. I cannot reconcile myself to the idea that a single individual, be he the wisest and most responsible man on earth, should be invested, even in an emergency, with the power to enact laws affecting a fifth of the human race. We have had only too bitter an experience of the truth, which Lord Morley has crystallised in

one of his aphorisms, that "Public Safety, Social Order and similar phrases easily become but fair names the scope and policy of the Bill as the Government of India desired them to do in their latest representations. They have no doubt endorsed cordially the policy of the eventual realisation of responsible self-government of India, but they have denied that India is at present fit for it and they have declared that the announcement did not give any promise of even "the grant of partial responsibility" at present. They have also repudiated our demand for the application of the principle of self-determination. The Bill seeks to provide, according to the Joint Committee, the solution for the problem enunciated in declaration of His Majesty's Government of the 20th August 1917, which is described to be "to design the first stage in a measured progress towards responsible government." The nature and scope of this first stage, they say, have been misunderstood by the critics of the scheme. "Its critics forget," we are told, "that the announcement spoke for a substantial step in the direction of the gradual development of self-governing institutions, not of the partial introduction of responsible government; and it is this distinction which justifies the method by which the Bill imposes responsibility both on Ministers to the Legislative Council and on the members of the Legislative Council to their constituents, for the result of that part of the administration which is transferred to their charge."

The hesitation and the reserve, the suspicion and caution that have thus characterised their report, seriously impair the value of their final proposals, which otherwise could have been improved and liberalised by them, without risk to the peace, safety or tranquillity of India. The extent to which this narrow spirit has pervaded their report is clearly indicated in its initial paragraphs. The Joint Committee, evidently under Lord Selborne's guidance, decided to expand the preamble to the Act, so as to bring all the qualifying clauses and restrictive conditions of the 20th August announcement within its compass in order to give "equal value" to all the parts thereof. The expansion, however, has had one good effect, evidently due, as paragrah 7 of the report indicates, but does not admit, to the strong presentation of the Congress case by our deputation

before the Committee. The preamble has substituted Parliament in place of the Indian and the British Government as the authority upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and for a Reign of Terror. I do not ignore the fact that assurances were given by Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons and the recommendations have been made by the Joint Committee, that exercise of this power by the Governor-General would be subject to the scrutiny both of the Secretary of State and of a Standing Committee of the House of Commons. I am aware that Mr. Montagu has stated, that all important cases would be brought up before the House by the Indian Secretary and would be made, whenever he deemed it needful, matter of debate or resolution by the House. But we know what all such invitations for the voluntary interest of Parliament amount to. There is no statutory guarantee that only the Parliament or the House of Commons—not the minister of the Crown, who is usually and necessarily the mouthpiece of the Governor-General shall, during the transition period, sanction laws which the Indian Legislature may have wrongly refused to enact. Unless this is provided, the risk of the abuse of what are called reserved powers will remain very real. It has also been argued that the very magnitude of the powers thus lodged in the hands of the Governors and Governor-General would operate as a check against their frequent exercise, and it is also contended that the tension that may be produced by its abuse may develop situations which would result in its disuse or abolition.

If the power thus given is not to be exercised or if its exercise will lead to its abolition, there is no necessity whatever to provide for it. However this may be, so far as our present situation goes, our experience of the Government of India's responsibility or responsiveness to public opinion is most disheartening. Verbal assurances by well-meaning politicians have not availed against the wilful misapplication of existing powers, nor have understandings and conventions availed us against the determination of obstinate bureaucrats to over-ride them. Weapons of repression, which had been in disuse and had rusted for a century, have been taken out of their ancient armoury and employed with a rigour of which the Punjab has borne the brunt.

Coercive powers intended for war purposes have been deliberately perverted for suppressing normal and legitimate political activity or agitation. We have known how even resolutions of the House of Commons have been treated as inconsequential *ipse dixits* of a far-off assembly.

It is indeed surprising that with his intimate knowledge of the past record of the Indian Government, Mr. Montagu should have seriously contended that the statutory protection of Parliament on this most important matter should be left to understandings, especially when some other matter of less consequence have been made to depend for their validity or their continuance on a vote of either House of Parliament under the very Act. It was possible in 1913 for a reactionary House of Lords to protect the interests of the bureaucracy and veto the overdue reform of providing the United Provinces with an Executive Council. Even a most liberal House of Commons may find it very difficult, except with the consent of the Indian Secretary, to veto as of right under the present statute an obnoxious repressive measure which the Indian executive may have carried over the heads of the representative legislative authority in the land.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, I have dealt with the Grand Committee procedure and then I go on to discuss the question of the powers of the Governor and the Governor-General. I shall not trouble you by reading it. I am now simply commending most of the rest of my address to your notice. I will not take up your time, because you have got copies of my speech and you can read it at your leisure. But I shall only read to you some passages which I consider of some importance and which ought to be read.

Powers of Governor and he Governor-General

The sum total of the reserved powers in the hands of the Government or Governor-General in respect of legislation is, indeed, enormous. In the first place, he has the usual power of vetoing a law passed by the legislature. He has also another power given to him under the new Reform Act to stop the pro-

gress of a Bill in the Legislature and even prevent discussion of the whole or any part of a Bill, if he thinks that it affects the safety or tranquility of any part of a province. And then, in addition to all this, he has the power to enact affirmatively, over-riding the opposition of the Legislature, any law on the same ground subject to the subsequent sanction of the Secretary of State. We are deeply grateful to Colonel Wedgwood and Mr. Ben Spoor and other British friends, who put forward the Congress case before the House of Commons, in this and in other respects. The amendment proposed by Colonel Wedgwood, to permit at least a free discussion of Bills and motions in all cases by the legislature concerned, was opposed by Mr. Montagu and rejected by the House. In the result, we have only to trust to the extra good sense and statesmanship of the new race of governors we are promised, and to the increased interest in Indian affairs which the House of Commons is expected to evince in future.

The Budget

If the powers of the Governors and the Governor-General-legislative are so wide and unrestricted, their powers in regard to the Budget appear to me on close examination nearly as wide and far-reaching. The decision of the Joint Committee to reject the scheme of separate purses in the provinces is no doubt a just and correct one, based on the practical unworkability and unsoundness of the proposals made, but I cannot say that the alternative procedure they have now settled with the approval of Parliament is in any way consistent with the existence of a really effective budget right in the Legislative Council. The operative part of the new scheme is as follows :

"They advise that, if the Governor in the course of preparing either his first or any subsequent budget finds that there is likely to be a serious or protracted difference of opinion between the executive council and his ministers on this subject, he should be empowered at once to make an allocation of revenue and balance between the reserved and transferred subjects, which

would continue for at least the whole life of the existing legislative council."

It will be remembered that it is the power not to "direct" but to influence and eventually to control the policy of reserved subjects, through the Budget, that was all along demanded by us and was believed to have been conceded by the Reform Scheme. In this matter there existed no difference of opinion whatever between the several sections of progressive Indians. In the Bombay Moderates' memorandum this was the position expected to result from the Budget proposals in the original Reform Scheme. The Government of India were alarmed at this possibility and in consequence propounded their separate purses scheme, which has now been abandoned. It was at this time that Sir Sankaran Nair wrote his masterly dissenting minutes, for which, and for the courageous attitude he took up on the Punjab question, the country will ever remain grateful. In the course of one of these minutes he accurately described the popular attitude towards the Budget proposals in the following words :

> "Notwithstanding much that could be said against the Reforms Report Scheme, a number of critics rallied to its support for the reasons, among others, that it provided for a unified budget and for its being voted by the Legislature...... The control by the Legislature must in any event be regarded as indispensable if the Reforms are to be worth anything in the eye of even the supporters of the scheme."

It is exactly this right and power in respect of reserved subjects that the Joint Committee have definitely negatived. They say :

> "The budget should not be capable of being used us a means for enabling minister or a majority of the Legislative Council to direct the policy of reserved subjects; but on the other hand the Executive Council should be helpful to ministers in their desire to develop the departments entrusted to their care."

Thus, not only can the Governor settle the Budget of a province for three years if he anticipates trouble, not only can he prevent the minister or the legislature from making any attempt to direct the policy of reserved subjects, even if they involve extra expenditure or taxation, but in regard to all financial matters the authority of the Governor or Governor-General has been made by the Committee as complete and unfettered as it might be. Their report says : "The Committee desire it to be made perfectly clear that this power is real and that its exercise should not be regarded as unusual or arbitrary."

Some Improvements

It must in fairness be admitted that the scheme has been improved in several directions by the Joint Committee. Of these improvements the addition of two more Indian members to the Viceroy's Executive Council is an appreciable one.

I would also draw special attention to the recommendations which relate to the revision of the existing Land Revenue assessments and policy in India. The declaration of policy by the Joint Committee on this sore and vexed question in the following words, will, I sincerely hope, soon lead to some appreciable alleviation of the arbitrary and so often unbearable burdens which the present system imposes on the poverty-stricken Indian ryot :

"The Committee are impressed by the objections raised by many witnesses to the manner in which certain classes of taxation can be laid upon the people of India by executive action without, in some cases, any statutory limitation of rates and, in other cases, and adequate prescription by statute of the methods of assessment. They consider that the imposition of new burdens should be gradually brought more within the purview of the legislature."

Division of Functions

I do not propose to weary you by going through the lists of

reserved and transferred subjects as finally settled by the Joint Committee, which we may presume will be incorporated in the regulations soon to be laid before Parliament under the new Act. I am convinced that the Congress was fully justified in pressing on Parliament the demand of the country for immediate full provincial autonomy, and that it would have failed in its duty if it had refrained from so doing. But as dyarchy has come to stay in our Provincial Governments, until we are able to supersede it by full provincial autonomy, I may just as well refer to two subjects, in which the so-called transference of increased power has been hailed in some quarters as a great concession in itself. Thanks to the report of the Featham Committee and the dissenting mitute of Sir Sankran Nair, the Government of India's retrogressive proposals about Education and Industry have been vetoed. But in spite of this the amount of popular initiative or control in either of these departments is not in the result so very great as might be supposed. Education, for instance, is a transferred subject, but it is subject to the conditions that all new universities, the old universities of Benaras and Calcutta, Chiefs, Colleges and European Schools, secondary education in Bengal and the Central Scientific and Industrial Research Institutes, are not to be transferred. All this constitutes a diminution in the area of control of a subject admitted to be eminently fit for transference to ministerial responsibility and popular control. Again, that part of educational administration, which would involve the obvious duties of compulsion and taxation, *viz*., free primary education, is severely left to the Minister to manage without the slightest prospect of his hoping for financial relief from the reserved departments or their ample revenues.

Similarly though agriculture is a transferred subject, the benefit derivable from the transfer is substantially lessened by the fact that irrigation, water storage as well as Land Revenue will be reserved. Again, the development of Industries is to be a transferred subject, but factories and mines, railways, shipping and navigation including waterways, ports and customs, currency and coinage are to be reserved subjects. It must tax the brains of all ordinary men to find what discernible development of

industries can exist without factories and the facilities provided by the departments not transferred.

Fiscal Autonomy

A connected subject with that of industries, on which some of us are prone to over-rate the concession made, is what is claimed to be the partial grant of fiscal autonomy. Fiscal autonomy in its strict sense has reference to the tariff and customs arrangements by which the Government regulates the commerce of the country and also riases revenue out of the country's trade. It is in respect of this that we have long claimed our right to levy duties or impose restrictions in the interests of India's well-being and to be free from the dictation of the Imperial Government so often made in the interests of British capital and commerce. Whether anything approaching this right is likely to be secured by the recommendations of the Joint Committee has to be judged by the following passage of their report :

"Nothing is more likely to endanger the good relations between India and Great Britain than a belief that India's fiscal policy is dictated from Whitehall in the interests of the trade of Great Britain. That such a belief exists at the moment there can be no doubt. That there ought to be no room for it in the future is equally clear ..In the opinion of the Committee, therefore, the Secretary of State should as far as possible avoid interference on this subject when the Government of India and its Legislature are in agreement, and they think that his intervention when it does take place, should be limited to safeguarding the international obligations of the Empire or any fiscal arrangements within the Empire to which His Majesty's Government is a party."

Anxious as I am to commend the just generous spirit in which the Joint Committee have tried to solve this question, I am unable to regard their recommendation as anything more than a pious hope. It is clear that unless and until we get responsible Government real fiscal autonomy cannot exist.

Periodical Parliamentary Enquiry

The Congress demand for the realisation of responsible government within a definite time-limit was not acceded to, when th Montagu-Chelmsford scheme was framed, and in its place there are provided a series of enquiries at the end of 5 and 10 years respectively for the further transference of provincial subjects to popular con.rol. Some of oui countrymen welcomed these enquiries, because they looked like the old periodical Parliamentary enquiries into Indian affairs, which the Congress has asked to be revived in its earlier years. They also hoped successfully to survive the test and investigation that would be made and, like Oliver Twist, to go forward again and ask for more.

The injustice of submitting a nation's birthright to the jurisdiction and decisions of an outside body or committee was on the other hand deeply resented by many others, who felt that any such submission to jurisdiction and consequent acceptance of verdict would be essentially wrong and unworthy of the self-respect of Indians. India's national self-realisation became so evident and overwhelming during the anti-Rowlatt Bill agitation that the Government of India was greatly alarmed and instructed Lord Meston to ask for the withdrawal of the promise of the 5 years revisions. Lord Meston fixed the period for the next revision at the minimum of ten years, and it is a matter for disappointment that the Joint Committee have accepted this view. They have omitted the clause in the Bill relating to the 5 years revision and have provided only for an enquiry after ten years. I do not attach much importance to these periodical examinations, so wounding to our self-respect and so susceptible of being used by the bureaucracy for its own purposes. But the fixing of the ten years' limit is significant as showing the temper of these who finally shaped the scheme.

Central Government

Perhaps the most serious omission in the Act, as finally passed by both houses, is that it fails to provide for any transference of administrative or political powers to the representa-

tives of the people in the central Government. Except for the addition of two Indian members to the Viceroy's Executive Council and an expansion of the Central Legislature into chambers with a preponderance of elected members, the powers and functions of the Governor-General-in-Council in all matters are maintained as effectively as the have been till now. Even on the narrow principles laid down by they Joint Committee, there existed no ground to withhold the grant of some powers to the Central Legislature in respect of the Budget and in some spheres of administration. It is remarkable and significant too that their report has neither endorsed nor rejected any of the untenable grounds on which the Government of India repeatedly urged that the Central Government should be left entirely untouched. Nor have they dealt with the repeated demand pressed before them by nearly all the Indian deputations that the element of responsibility, the keystone of the new fabric, should be introduced in the Central Government also if the scheme is to have a fair trial.

Woman Suffrage

A feature of the Act which has disappointed me much is the failure to do justice to the political rights of Indian women. I had hoped that Parliament would profit by the lesson of the woman suffrage agitation in England, but they have repeated the mistake of the Franchise Committee. The justice of the claim was recognised and the flimsiest of arguments were advanced in favour of delay. I trust that Indian men will come to the rescue of their sisters and hasten the day of their enfranchisement.

The Enfranchisement of Labour and the Masses

Another unsatisfactory feature of the Act is the attitude shown towards the enfranchisement of the masses and the wage-earning classes. The Joint Committee have limited the total number of people enfranchised to about 1.5 per cent of the population. Mr. Montagu welcomed trade unionism in India but added that industrial labour had as yet attained a very small development. He did not choose to tell us how India's

industrial development has been obstructed by the British Indian Government. Nor did he refer to the 80 per cent of our people who depend on agriculture. To the *kisan* delegates present here I am glad to see in their hundreds, who represent the great agricultural proletariat of this country, and to the labour delegates, this Congress owes a special duty. We have to see to their enfranchisement and to the improvement of their hard conditions of life.

These, fellow-delegates, are the reforms which have been granted to us. There is little reason for us to be enthusiastic over them but we must take them for what they are worth. We shall not lag behind others in extracting all the good there is in them, but we are not prepared to surrender our demand in consideration for the enforced schooling and periodical examinations provided for us. We cannot and we will not rest content till we gain the full measure of that demand.

Commissions in the Army and Navy

But what would reforms, however substantial, avail us if they are confined to the civil administration of the country. The most perfect machinery of self-government cannot endure for a day if it does not rest on the solid foundation of self-defence. The most generous Parliamentary grant of full responsible government cannot subsist without the corresponding grant to us of the power to defend ourselves, of the right to bear arms in defence of our motherland, of the right to possess our own army and navy, manned, officered and controlled by our own countrymen. Theories of a world peace, of a League of Nations and the rights of small nationalities, are all attractive in their way, though they seem now to recede further away than ever from practical realisation. But they cannot justify the continued emasculation of an ancient nation which her political subjection has brought upon her. Notwithstanding the activity displayed in the starting of political reforms, the delay and reluctance shown in the recognition and the grant of India's right to enlist her youth and manhood in the service of her army and navy, in the highest as in the lowest ranks, is indeed deplorable. We are all thankful in this

connection to our distinguished fellow-countrymen, Sir Abbas Ali Baig and Sir K.G. Gupta, who have pointedly noticed this serious deficiency in the scheme for the speedy grant of self-government to India. It is also gratifying to note that Mr. Montagu has shown a readier tendency to recognise the importance of urgent reform in this respect than he was disposed to show either in the Reform Report, or in the most disappointing steps that he has taken in regard to military and naval commissions for Indians. "We must not deny to India" he said in his concluding speech on the Bill in Parliament, "self-government because she cannot take her proper share in her own defence and then deny Indians the opportunity of learning to defend themselves. These are problems of which Parliament assumes responsibility by the passage of this Bill." Will Parliament then take immediate steps to fulfil this responsibility ?

The Khilafat Question

I now turn to a question of supreme importance to our Mohammedan brothers and for that reason of equal importance to all Indians. I mean the Khilafat question. It is impossible for one part of the nation to stand aloof while the other part is suffering from a serious grievance. This was clearly shown when the vast majority of non-Muslims made common cause with the Muslims and abstained from participating in the recent peace celebrations in India. No words of mine are necessary to emphasise the obvious duty of this Congress to give the question its best consideration.

The entry of Turkey in the war was a most momentous event from the Indian Muslims' point of view. They felt no inconsiderable misgivings about their attitude when they saw that an issue had arisen, which seemed to involve a conflict between their loyalty to their King and country and duty to the religious head of the Islamic world. But these doubts were happily short-lived and the Indian Mohammedans cheerfully cast in their lot with the British Empire when the memorable announcement of the 2nd November, 1914, was made by Lord Hardinge, securing to the Mohammedans complete immunity from any interference

with their religious feelings. This announcement was followed by similar assurances from other British statesmen. Mr. Lloyd George in his famous speech of the 5th January, 1914, said : "Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race."

The war has ended in complete victory for the allied arms. Muslim India, and United India, demands that full effect be given to these assurances.

Apart from the promises and pledges given to His Majesty's Muslim subjects they have the right to demand the application of the principle of self-determination to the component parts of the Turkish Empire in the same way as it has been applied to Poland and Yugoslavia. What reason is there for a different treatment of Mesopotamia and Syria, where the population is almost entirely Muslims in faith, or of Palestine and Armenia, were Muslims are more numerous than the followers of any other religion ?

As to who is the rightful *Khalifat-ul-Islam*, it is unnecessary for me to enter into historical or religious considerations. Lord Robert Cecil has admitted in the House of Commons that "His Majesty's Government have never departed from the attitude that the question of Khilafat is one for Muslim opinion alone to decide". Muslim opinion has now decided it, in a manner which leaves no possible doubt, in favour of the Sultan of Turkey. With Arabia independent, with foreign powers governing Mesopotamia, Syria and Armenia in the guise of mandatories, with Palestine restored to the Jews, with the Greeks securely lodged in Smyrna and the Hinterland, with Constantinople itself internationalised, what, I ask, is the position of the *Khilafat-ul-Islam* ? Fellow-delegates, it is a serious question demanding your most earnest attention.

Indians Overseas

It has been our unfortunate duty from year to year of late to

discuss the questions affecting the status of our countrymen who, trusting to the protection that British citizenship should ensure to them, have gone to the different parts of the British Dominions in pursuit of trade or employment.

Among these South Africa has claimed the largest part of public attention. There, our countrymen have exhibited, in the face of heavy odds, qualities of orderly and constitutional resistance, endurance and pluck which make us feel proud as a nation. We had hoped that after the struggle they carried on for eight years involving great sacrifice and entailing imprisonment of thousands of innocent men, there would be honourable peace for them. But it was not to be. Their European rivals in trade have set up a vehement and virulent agitation against them which may end in disaster to them if we do not do our duty. Fortunately both the Government of India and the Secretary of State are on the alert. And we may hope that at the very least the new Act just passed by the South African Legislature will be repealed or so amended as not to diminish the rights existing at the time of the Smuts-Gandhi settlement. All India will anxiously await the result of Sir Benjamin Robertson's mission to South Africa. We may derive further consolation from the fact that out good friend Mr. C.F. Andrews is on his way to South Africa to assist our countrymen there. The Imperial Citizenship Association deserves our congratulations for arranging Mr. Andrews' visit. As you are aware Mr. Andrews was requested on his way to visit East Africa. His cable to Mr. Gandhi from East Africa is alarming and shows that the greed and the prejudice of the European trader and speculator will make him compass the ruin of the Indian settlers in East Africa even by employing dishonest means. The history of East Africa is a history of peaceful development by our countrymen without the gun and the brandy bottle. The Indian trader who has gone to East Africa has been on the friendliest terms with the Africans and has raised their culture without making any boast of civilising them. It is a libel to say that our traders have brought about moral depravity. Let us hope that the Government of India will tell the anti-Indian agitators in unmistakable language that the rights of the Indians in East Africa are not to be interfered with in any way what-

soever. In your name I assure our countrymen of our warm sympathy and support in their struggle to defeat this utterly unscrupulous and interested agitation.

Then there remains the question of indentured labour. We may congratulate the Government of India and ourselves that on this question there is no division of opinion. The system of indentured labour is gone for ever. I trust that Lord Chelmsford's assurance that the Fiji indentures will be cancelled in the beginning of the new year will be fulfilled and that an announcement to that effect will be made before the year is out. It would be wrong of me not to mention Sir Geroge Barnes' name in this connection. These questions come under his department. And thanks to Mr. Andrews' exposure and Sir George Barnes' sympathetic attitude we shall soon see our countrymen in Fiji freed from the curse. The national corollary to this must be the termination of Indian indentures in the other parts of the dominions also.

Swadeshi

From matters which require political action I come to that which in its one aspect requires no political or legal action, yet which is one that is fraught with the greatest consequences for good. I refer to Swadeshi. Mr. Gandhi has made this question his own. He would, if he could, revive the ancient industry of hand-spinning and make the country self-supporting. Modern economists may doubt the success of the scheme in this age of machinery. But Mr. Gandhi's scheme is one in which there is no waste and if it becomes popular it bids fair to solve the problem of finding a subsidiary occupation to agriculture. Seventy-three per cent, of our population is agricultural. No agricultural population can exist without a supplementary industry. If our women were to take to hand-spinning and if hand-weaving became fashionable as before, without a big organisation and without a large outlay of money, we can not only produce sufficient cloth for our wants but provide the peasantry with auxiliary industry. I commend the scheme to the attention of the delegates.

Other Subjects

I have trespassed enough on your indulgence. Yet I have not touched many important problems which vitally affect the future of our country. I have not considered the question of education with which is bound up all hope of future progress, nor have I dealt with industries or the terrible poverty of the people. The Universities and the Industries Commissions have done good work in their respective spheres, but true reform can only be effected when the full control of these departments is put in the hands of the representatives of the people, who alone can understand and supply the needs of the country. Resolutions on these subjects will, I doubt not, be laid before you for your acceptance. They will be moved by eminent speakers, far more competent to deal with their special subjects than I can presume to be.

Mr. B.G. Horniman

But, by your leave, I shall say a few words about a friend of India who has suffered because of the love he bore for our country. This Congress needs no words of mine to inform it of the many and varied services which Mr. B.G. Horniman has rendered to our cause. We are a grateful nation and our friends are not so many that we can afford to forget or lose any of them. Mr. B.G. Horniman, as you are aware, was removed from a bed of sickness and without any respite made to leave the country. That is the way of the bureaucracy. Charges of a gross nature have been made against him in the House of Commons and elsewhere. They have been contradicted and proved to be false, but there has been no withdrawal of them, nor has Mr. Horniman been permitted to return. In England he is devoting himself to our cause, but that is poor consolation for us, and for all who miss his wise counsel and his sturdy independence.

Conclusion

Fellow-delegates, I have had my say. It is for now to deliberate on the many problems which await solution. Yours is a

tremendous responsibility. India is entering upon a new phase of her existence and her future is in your keeping. It is for you to decide what is the best and the quickest way for us to reach our goal.

But what is our ultimate goal ? We want freedom of thought, freedom of action, freedom to fashion our own destiny and build up an India—suited to the genius of her people. Wo do not wish to make of India a cheap and slavish limitation of West. We have so far sought to liberalise our government on the western model. Whether that will satisfy us in the future I cannot say. But let us bear in mind that western democracy has not proved a panacea for all ills; it has not yet solved the problems which surround us. Europe is torn asunder by the conflict between labour and capital, and the proletariat is raising its head against the rule of the classes. It may be that when we get the power to mould our institutions, we shall evolve a system of government, which will blend all that is best in the east and the west. Mean-while, let us beware of the errors of the west and at the same time cast out the evil customs and traditions which have clung to us. We must aim at an India where all are free and have the fullest opportunities of development; where women have ceased to be in bondage, and the rigours of the caste system have dis-appeared; where there are no privileged classes or communities; where education is free and open to all; where the capitalist and the landlord do not oppress the labourers and the ryot; where labour is respected and well paid, and poverty, the nightmare of the present generation, is a thing of the past. Life will then be worth living in this country, it will be inspired by joy and hope, and the terrible misery we see around us will become a bad dream which has faded away from our memory, on our awaken-ing to welcome the morning sun.

But that day is yet distant. We have still a difficult path, full of obstacles and pitfalls, before us. Let us march ahead with truth as our guide and courage and our watchword, and before long we shall reach the promised land.